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CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHRIST.

CHRISTIANITY

AND

THE CHRIST

A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

BY

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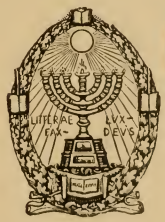

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THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED TO

MY WIFE

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF
TWENTY HAPPY YEARS OF OUR WORK IN THE
PASTORATE AND THE COLLEGE.

PREFACE.

THE purpose of this book is to show that the Christian faith is reasonable. The whole subject is made to revolve around the Christ. The Christian life involves a vital relation to him, the four gospels are a record of his life, his deeds, and his doctrines, of which the other books of the New Testament are an unfoldment. The Old Testament leads directly to him, the doctrine of the supernatural finds its strongest support at last in his majestic personality, the needs of the sinner are met by him, the peace and joy of the believer are assured by him, the course of history is being and is to be determined by him, the hope of humanity is in him, and the realization of our religious ideals is guaranteed by him. In a treatise so brief it was nec-

essary to select a few of the essential points in the "System of Christian Evidences" and to ignore a great many critical questions. The discussion of these must be left to the larger treatises on the subject. It is hoped, however, that although critical questions have been for the most part avoided the results of such critical study have been fairly represented in the conclusions reached, and that all that is of importance in these questions has been carried in the few essentials treated. The chapters vary greatly in length. That on "Christ and the Prophets" is the longest. Since its purpose is to set forth the fact that the preparation for Christ was a vast historic movement, and not merely to establish a few marvelous predictions, it was necessary to show the sweep of this movement and the evolution of its conditions in a somewhat extended way. Only in this way could the unique character of the movement be portrayed and its argumentative force made to appear. The same is

true of the chapter on "Christ and History."

Chapters III to VII inclusive, are all related to the supernatural, and must all be taken into account in any estimate of the argument for the supernatural. Indeed, no one line of argument can be isolated and fairly estimated. Each line of proof is related to every other, and it is the convergence of all lines in Christ that makes faith reasonable.

Chapters VIII, IX, and XII involve certain philosophic principles which could not be debated, but were essential to the argument and must be assumed. These assumptions may all be summed up in the doctrine that our religious ideals are rational and must therefore be met. The only alternative is blank skepticism. We shall never consent to deny the rationality of these ideals in the interest of intellectual confusion and moral chaos. If Christ continues to satisfy these ideals the race will continue to believe in him and to recite

its creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth : and in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord."

BRADFORD P. RAYMOND.

Middletown, Conn., May, 1894.

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CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

IT is important, first of all, to get a well-defined idea of the subject in hand and of the end to be reached by this study; and for our idea on the subject we must go to the original sources in the New Testament Scriptures. It is evident that the New Testament makes Christianity revolve around the Christ. There are many evidences in Matthew's gospel, such as his quotations from prophecy and its fulfillment in Christ, his references to the law, to Christ's Jewish genealogy, and to his use of Jewish thought, that he had the Jew in mind while he wrote, and that he used his material

accordingly. Mark's gospel was just as evidently written for the Gentiles. He makes no reference to the Jewish law, but is careful to explain words and usages with which the Gentiles would not be likely to be familiar. He deals largely with the external life of the Lord, and gives us a vivid picture of the things Jesus did and the circumstances under which he wrought the mighty works recorded. Luke's gospel looks toward neither Jew nor Gentile, but toward all men. John writes, according to his own words, to show that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."* He carries us on beyond the deeds and words of the Lord, and opens to us the depth of his nature, thereby showing us something of his relation to God and giving us grounds for faith in him, for the work which he undertook to do.

If we examine Paul's epistles, some of which were written at an earlier date than the gospels, it is easy to see that Christ is

* John xx, 31.

always the central figure. He writes to the Galatians as follows: "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son;"* and he assumes that all the preceding ages were preparatory for that advent; to the Ephesians he declares that God proposes, in a "dispensation of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth."† This carries the thought in Galatians on to the end of time, and then enthrones Christ head over all. This phase of Christ's supremacy is emphasized again in his letter to the Philippians, in the following sublime passage: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow;"‡ and he returns to it in his letters to the Colossians and to the Romans, where the whole creation is related to him, and is made to go groaning and trav-

* Gal. iv, 4. † Eph. i, 10. ‡ Phil. ii, 9.

ailing on in pain, working toward the realization of the ideal for which Christ came. The Book of Acts is the earliest Church history. It begins the disclosure of the agencies through which Christ moves out into the centuries for the dominance of the world, while the prophetic Book of Revelation, with its eager eyes to the future, seeks with glowing imagery to portray the final and glorious consummation. The first and the most important teaching of the New Testament, that which is always and of necessity assumed when not explicitly expressed, is that Jesus Christ is "the Light of the world," the "Son of God," the only and all-sufficient Saviour. Take this out, and the remains are "remains," fragments, and nothing more.

A second characteristic, and one flowing directly from the first, is that Christianity in its most essential meaning is a life, a spiritual life, rooted in the Christ. But for this very reason, because Christianity is a *life*, it is hard to define. No one has

answered the question, What is life? We may see the Christian life in its manifestations in the individual, in word and deed, and if the words are rich with the spirit of the Master, and the deeds loyal to the law, "thy neighbor as thyself," we call a man a Christian; the life, however, existed before either the words which confessed it or the deeds which manifested it. This life is manifest also in the various creeds of Christendom; like a fruitful root it has grown itself into the forms of thought of Catholic and Greek and of the various denominational creeds of Protestantism; but it was before all formulated creeds, and the creeds are to be recognized as only the intellectual molds into which the thinking Church has run this flowing life. We may see it manifested in the institutions of the Church, educational and philanthropic; in civil institutions, in constitutions and statutes. It shows itself in commerce, literature, art, and in all the forms of intercourse between men and

nations; but it existed before its manifestation in these forms. These are the external forms which address the senses; but what is the spiritual life itself? Like every other form of life, it eludes all definitions; put it into a word, and it is no longer life. A word is only a mental irritant which may help the living man to think something about life. We must not then be thrown into panic because under the needle point of a flippant skepticism we cannot answer, in perfectly fitting and satisfactory phrases, the question, What is the Christian life? A very good answer is the Yankee's answer, "You tell, what is your life?"

Undismayed, then, by the fact that we cannot define life, we may note that this word is characteristic with John; it is he who reports Christ's words to the Jews: "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye

may have life." * From him we have those remarkable words in the parable of the Good Shepherd, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." † Paul exhorts the Colossians to set their minds "not on the things that are upon the earth," and adds as his reason, "For ye died, and *your life* is hid with Christ in God;" ‡ he counts all else but loss if he may but win Christ and the life which is by faith in him. The word is very infrequently used in the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke; but the distinctive characteristics are nowhere else so boldly set forth. We there learn that we are to find life by losing it; we must not suffer an offending hand or eye to prevent us from entering into life. In the Sermon on the Mount the Master lays bare the root of this life in the inner man; it is a right heart, a heart that puts reconciliation with a brother before a gift at the altar; that will not tolerate the eye of lust; that overcomes

* John v, 39, 40. † John x, 10. ‡ Col. iii, 2.

evil with good, putting the merciless enemy to the blush by the deed of love; that prays to God, and not as do the Pharisees, to be seen of men; that forgives and expects to be forgiven; that trusts God, who cares for the birds and will not forget his children; that builds with unshaken confidence and for eternity upon the Rock of ages, and not upon the sand. That comment upon the Preacher of the Sermon on the Mount, which went the rounds among the hearers, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes," * was no shrewd guess, but rather a flash of the soul's hidden fire, which always responds to the electric touch of truth.

The Christian life, whose root John and Paul find in our relation to Christ, whose inner characteristics Jesus portrays in startling words in the Sermon on the Mount, is a life that carries with it the whole man, and is often comprehensively spoken of as the life of faith. Paul goes to

* Matt. vii, 29.

the root of the matter when he says: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." * But the word heart has peculiar significance in scriptural usage. We generally think of it as the seat of the affections, and often use the term figuratively in that sense; but in the Hebrew usage there was no such limitation; with them it was "the central seat of the lifeblood, the central organ of the body, with a motive force of its own to set agoing the whole circulation of the blood, a propelling force to draw out the vital materials and energies and keep them moving in all directions, and an attractive force to absorb and concentrate the vital streams." Haller calls it, "the first living and last dying thing;" its "first motion is the sure sign of life, its stillness the sure sign of death." It was to the Hebrew "the center of all active life, . . . the workshop of all independent activity and vitality." †

It was the central unit, therefore, from

* Rom. x, 10. † See Beck's *Biblical Psychology*, p. 81.

which went forth all the higher forms of spiritual power, in the processes of reflective thought, the glow of moral emotion, and the act of free volition. The life of faith must not, then, be thought of as the credulous act of a superstitious man, since faith, even in its lowest exercise, involves all the powers, and in its highest, the heart-throb of faith, is the impulse which sets the whole man in motion and at his best. It is an act of the intellect; the Christian believes something, and for reasons satisfactory to him, and that is an intellectual exercise. But that alone does not make a man a Christian; the affections must be touched and the emotions kindled. Neither is this enough, for, however he may weep over his sins, or lustily sing, "O, how I love Jesus!" he may yet be the veriest fraud, a perfect caricature of Christianity. When Jesus summoned Simon and Andrew from their nets on the Sea of Galilee the record informs us that "they straightway left the nets, and followed

him." * And when he called James and John, the sons of Zebedee, "they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him." † Their act illustrates the Christian faith in this particular; they turned their belief in Jesus and their motives for following him into the act of following. However far the intellect may carry a man into a belief in the doctrines which Christ taught; however deeply his emotions may be stirred, or powerfully his motives for action may crowd him on toward discipleship, unless, in obedience to these motives and in harmony with his belief, he put forth volition, and begin to follow, he comes short of Christian faith. This life of faith, then, brooks no rival; it commands the whole man. It appears, therefore, from our study of the New Testament, that Christianity is a life; it is a life of faith, which commands the intellect, affections, and will; it is a life of faith in the Son of God. These are the three

* Matt. iv, 20. † Matt. iv, 22.

distinctive characteristics given to Christianity in the New Testament. Leave out the third characteristic, and whatever else the faith may be, it is not a Christian faith. This faith in Christ means that we find in and through him the satisfaction of our present religious needs (forgiveness of sin, regeneration, assurance, etc.), and the guarantee of our religious hopes, both for time and eternity. Can we reasonably receive Christ's teaching and obey him at all hazards, even though it cost life itself? If we can, our faith is reasonable, and if we cannot, the Christian faith is a superstition. Assuming that this chapter has given a fairly well-defined idea of the subject in hand, we may now add that the purpose of this study is to show that the Christian faith is reasonable, and the only reasonable faith.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST AND THE REVISED VERSION.

WE have studied Christianity as we find it set forth in the Revised Version of the New Testament, and have found it to be a life, a life of faith in the Christ. We have called this Revised Version the original source of information ; but how shall we assure ourselves that this Gospel of ours is identical with the Gospel of the apostles? The argument, exhaustively carried out, is a very long one ; but the gist of it can be very briefly stated. If we compare our Gospel with the writings of Tertullian, Irenæus, and Clement of Alexandria, who lived in the latter part of the second century, we find that they had the very same Gospel that we have. They defend it as the Gospel that came down to them from the apostles ; and they had

opportunity to know that it was the Gospel accepted by the universal Church. Tertullian was Bishop of Hippo, in northern Africa, Irenæus was Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, and Clement was the head of a celebrated school in Alexandria. They were learned men, had traveled widely, and must have known not only the faith of the Church at that time, but what had been the faith of the Church for a very long time. We know, therefore, from their writings that far back in the second century the Church held and taught all the great essential facts and truths of the Gospel, just as we hold and teach them.

Moreover, there were living witnesses at that time connecting these writers directly with the apostles, so that they had the opportunity of verifying the faith of the Church of their time by the testimony of those who had seen, heard, and conversed with the apostles.

Clement was trained at Alexandria, under Pantænus, in the school over which he

at a later time presided, and Pantænus is represented as a hearer of the apostles. There can be little doubt that Clement had opportunity of knowing the facts concerning the life of Jesus from those who had heard the story from the apostles themselves. How eagerly these men would gather up the facts from such witnesses, how reverently they would regard them, and with what care would they preserve them! Clement heard Pantænus speak often of these things. He writes: "And these men, preserving the true tradition of the blessed teaching, directly from Peter and James, from John and Paul, the holy apostles, son receiving it from father (but how few are they who are like their fathers!), came by God's providence even to us, to deposit among us those seeds (of truth) which were derived from their ancestors and the apostles." *

Polycarp, who became a martyr about

* See Salmon's *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 36.

the year 155 A. D., when he was eighty-six years of age, had been a disciple of the apostle John, and Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, writes of him : " I can recall the very place where Polycarp used to sit and teach, his manner of speech, his mode of life, his appearance, the style of his address to the people, his frequent references to St. John, and to others who had seen the Lord ; how he used to repeat from memory their discourses, and the things which he had heard from them concerning our Lord, his miracles and his teaching, and how, being instructed himself by those who were eyewitnesses of the life of the Lord, there was in all that he said a strict agreement with the Scriptures."*

Such a witness as Polycarp, whose lifetime runs back into the first century, who tells us that he knew St. John and others that had seen the Lord ; who was accustomed to repeat " from memory their dis-

* See Salmon's *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 32.

courses," according to Irenæus; whose faith was tested by the fires of persecution, and who "steadfastly refused before the proconsul to deny his King and Saviour, whom he had served six and eighty years, and from whom he had experienced nothing but love and mercy;" * who went joyfully to the stake and praised God amid the flames that he was worthy "to be numbered among his martyrs, to drink of the cup of Christ's suffering" †—such a witness puts the question of the identity of our Gospel and that taught by the apostles almost beyond controversy.

If we go back to the first half of the second century we find there another witness for the facts and teachings of our gospels. Justin Martyr was born about the close of the first century, and died about the middle of the second. He was converted to the Christian faith after he had come to mature manhood, and we have

* See Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, vol. i, p. 166. † *Ibid.*

two of his works in our libraries to-day; from these we learn that he had all the facts and teachings of the gospels. He held a discussion at Ephesus with the Jew Trypho, and, after giving him an account of his studies in philosophy and of his conversion to Christianity, he assures him that the Christians "have not believed empty fables or words without any foundation, but words filled with the Spirit of God and big with power and flourishing with grace." He then proceeds to show from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. In the course of his argument he makes so many references to the life of Christ that one could almost write out the whole Gospel narrative from this one work. He shows that John was his forerunner, that he was born of a virgin, and laid in a manger because there was no room in the inn; he describes the visit of the Magi, mentions Bethlehem as the place of Christ's birth, Herod's wrath, the massacre of the innocents, the flight into Egypt with

Joseph and Mary, and his return after Archelaus had succeeded Herod. He speaks of his being thirty years of age when he began his public ministry, of his baptism by John, whose dress and food he mentions, and of the descent of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. He quotes the two great commandments by which Christ sums up all righteousness, describes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, enters into the details of his trial and crucifixion, speaks of his answers to the Pharisees, his silence before Pilate, mentions his resurrection and ascension, and assumes that these are the well-known and universally accepted facts concerning Jesus throughout the whole Church. These references which come from the dialogue with Trypho might be greatly extended. They show conclusively that our Gospel is the old Gospel. When we remember that Justin lived from the latter part of the first century until the middle of the second; that Christianity had spread far and wide over the region

where he spent his life; that he was not converted until he had come to mature manhood; that he was a philosopher and had sought rest for his soul in all the philosophies, and that finally he was led by an aged man to the light and the life found in Jesus of Nazareth and became an ardent propagandist of the faith, we have very cogent reasons for believing that his testimony as to the content of the gospels is entirely trustworthy. The question whether Justin had the four gospels that we now have has been much debated. He neither gives the names of the authors whom he quotes, nor does he quote the gospels accurately. It has been conjectured that he drew his information from some gospels extant in his time, but now lost, or that he had many of his facts from tradition. If that were true, it would only show that the facts narrated in our gospels were widespread, and that they constituted the substance of the "lost gospels" and the content of current tradition. But the argu-

ment is forced and exaggerated which attempts to deny to Justin the knowledge of the four gospels. In the first place he informs us that the writings to which he refers are memoirs of the life of the Lord, that they are called gospels, that they were written by the apostles and by companions of the apostles. These facts point directly to our four gospels. Matthew and John were apostles, and Mark and Luke were companions of apostles. He assures us that these gospels were read in the churches in connection with the prophets. We know from the writings of Irenæus, who became Bishop of Lyons about 180 A. D., that the four gospels we now have were the gospels then accepted by the Church as having apostolic authority, the gospels read in the services of the Church in connection with the prophets. It would have been almost, if not quite, impossible to have introduced Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the place of other gospels accepted in the time of Justin. Irenæus was born and

brought up in Asia Minor, and must have been thoroughly familiar with the practice of the Church in this respect during the very period of which Justin writes. The improbability of the hypothesis which denies to Justin the knowledge of these gospels is, therefore, very great. And as to the accuracy of his quotations it may be said that they are as accurate as were his quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, which were certainly in his possession. The fact is, the Scripture rolls were inconvenient; they were not divided into chapter and verse as our New Testament is; there was no concordance lying at hand to enable him to verify his quotations, and he quoted from memory, or often only attempted to give the substance of the passage to which he referred.

It would require too much space to follow in detail the arguments by which experts seek to identify the gospels used by Justin with the four accepted gospels. We must satisfy ourselves, therefore, by giving

a few illustrations of the method of the argument. It has been claimed all along the centuries that Tatian, a companion and disciple of Justin, composed a harmony of the four gospels, which he called the *Diatessaron.** But this harmony could not be found. There was also a commentary by Ephraem the Syrian on this *Diatessaron*, and this was lost. The result was a denial that there ever were any such documents. This latter document has, however, been recently discovered, and it shows that there was such a harmony, and that Tatian used John's gospel "as the framework of this harmony."† If Tatian had the four gospels Justin must also have had them. Another theory, which puts the origin of Luke's gospel late in the second century, has recently been demolished. Marcion lived about 140 A. D. He composed a gospel, using Luke as its basis, and

* The word is a Greek word which means "through the four."

† See Alexander Mair's *Studies in the Christian Evidences*, p. 147.

the critic has set up the claim that Marcion's was the earlier and that Luke was constructed out of it. Professor Sanday, of Oxford, has recently subjected this question to an elaborate investigation, and even the author of *Supernatural Religion*, a stubborn opponent, is obliged to concede that his "earlier hypothesis is untenable," and that Marcion must have had Luke's gospel when he constructed his own. If Marcion had it, Justin certainly must have had it.* John's gospel has been in the hottest of the fight. Baur insisted that it was not written until 160 A. D. In support of this conclusion Baur relied on the Clementine Homilies, which were written about 160 A. D., and which, according to him, showed no knowledge of John's gospel. But at that time we had only a part of these Homilies. In 1853 a German scholar discovered the remaining fragments and published them, and in that fragment

* See Salmon's *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 189.

there appears the clear quotation from John ix, 1–3. In Homily XIX, chap. xxii, we find the following indubitable reference to this passage:

"Whence our Teacher, when we inquired of him, in regard to the man who was blind from his birth, and recovered his sight, if this man sinned, or his parents, that he should be born blind, answered, Neither did he sin at all, nor his parents, but that the power of God might be made manifest through him in healing sins of ignorance." Hilgenfeld "at once acknowledged the question as finally closed." The final outcome of this study may be seen in the following: "According to Baur and his immediate followers, we have less than one fourth of the New Testament belonging to the first century. According to Hilgenfeld, the present head of Baur's school, we have somewhat less than three fourths belonging to the first century, while substantially the same thing may be said in regard to Holtzmann.

According to Renan, we have distinctly more than three fourths of the New Testament falling within the first century, and therefore within the apostolic age. This surely indicates a very decided and extraordinary retreat since the time of Baur's grand assault, that is, within the last fifty years." *

The attempt which has been made to show that a large part of our New Testament originated in the second century, and that it was therefore not to be trusted as an account of the Lord's teaching, has utterly failed. Baur started out to show that Matthew was written not earlier than 130 A. D., Mark 150 A. D., Luke 150 A. D., and John 160 or perhaps as late as 170 A. D. As a result of the discovery of ancient manuscripts, and of a more critical estimate of all the data in the case, there has been a gradual abandonment of this hypothesis. The studies in this subject have been so exhaustive and conclusive that there is no reason to

* See Mair's *Studies in the Christian Evidences*, p. 154.

expect the conclusions reached will ever be materially changed. It is not likely that any competent critic will ever again place the origin of the synoptic gospels in the second century.*

There are many other confirmatory lines of evidence which may be mentioned: the writings of the heretics of the early part of the second century, such as Basilides and Valentinus, and the recognition they give to the gospels; the discovery of manuscripts such as those specified above; a few

* The following table, taken from Dr. Alexander Mair's *Studies in the Christian Evidences*, will show the tendency and outcome of this critical study:

	Baur.	Volkmar.	Schenkel.	Hilgenfeld.	Renan.	Keim.	Holtzmann.	Weiss.
Matthew....	130+	110	70	70+	84	66	68	70+
Mark.....	150+	73	58	81+	76	100	75	69
Luke.....	150	100–3	80	100	94	90	80	80
John.....	160+	150	120	130+	125	130	125	95

The table will explain itself. The names above are the names of eminent scholars, and the figures below show the several estimates as to the time when the gospels were written.

letters from apostolic fathers, such as the epistles of Ignatius, Polycarp, and Barnabas, dating from 70 A. D. to 120 A. D.; * the translations of the New Testament into Syriac and Latin; the earliest known list of New Testament books, such as the *Muratorian Fragment*, and a few fragments from the Greek Apologists dating from 120 A. D. to 170 A. D. These all throw light upon the problem. An exhaustive study of these lines of evidence would serve to confirm us in the belief that the New Testament originated in the first century, as the Church has always supposed, and that it records the deeds and words of the Lord with substantial accuracy.

We have one witness whose testimony carries us back beyond the middle of the first century into the very heart of the times and community where these gospels originated. This witness is none other than Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, a man of large brain and thoroughly disciplined

* See Westcott's *Canon of the New Testament.*

mind, a famous debater, and at one time the most bitter opponent of the Christian faith. What is his testimony? If we reduce the number of his epistles to the four which are so universally accepted as to put them beyond controversy, we have First and Second Corinthians and the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans. It is sufficient to say that Paul was put to death under Nero probably in the year 64 A. D., and that some of these epistles run back probably more than fifteen years beyond that time.

What do they teach?

That Christ is the Messiah, and that in him the prophecies are fulfilled, must be put first. He goes back to this thought in all his great speeches; he makes it central in all his letters. It appears in his account of the covenant made with Abraham; it is always present in the emphasis he puts upon faith as the condition upon which Gentiles as well as Jews may become heirs according to the promise. There is but

one rational explanation of this faith, and that is that Paul was forced to believe that by his mighty works, and his mightier words and character, Jesus met all those expectations which the prophets had created concerning the Messiah.

The second fundamental thought with Paul was "Christ crucified." In this he gloried. He seems to be in possession of all the facts relating to the crucifixion. He does not give much space to details, but in his account of the Lord's Supper * he seems to have before his mind the circumstances under which this memorial was instituted. He turns to the deeper significance of the cross in its relation to faith and salvation.

The third great truth upon which Paul dwells is the doctrine of the resurrection. This is the culmination of the whole miraculous career of the Lord. He does not intend to belittle the many other mighty works which were wrought by Christ and his apostles. On the contrary, he assumes

* 1 Cor. xi, 23–26.

in his letter to the Church at Corinth that the power to work miracles was one of the gifts to the Church, and appeals to this power as well-known among them. In his defense of his own apostleship he says: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."*

We have mentioned three points in Paul's creed. They are Christ the Messiah, Christ the crucified, and Christ the risen Lord. He is always ready to stake his life upon these doctrines. In order to complete the sweep of his thought we ought to add one more point, namely, Christ the glorified. His thought always moves toward Christ enthroned. To him every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess his name.

These are the central themes of Paul's theology, and they imply a wide knowledge of the facts of Christ's life. For, according to his own testimony, his knowl-

* 2 Cor. xii, 12.

edge came first from the Lord himself, who called him to this apostleship; and then, after having spent some time in retirement, he went up to Jerusalem; and in his epistles he gives us a very impressive account of his intercourse with Peter and John, and with James, the brother of the Lord. Did he ask them no questions about the deeds and words of the Lord? He must have seen and known intimately, and must have conversed frequently with some of that famous five hundred who saw the Lord after his resurrection. One can but ask, Is Paul the man to neglect such an opportunity? Baur is right when he says of Paul: "He who could speak so definitely and in such detail about matters of fact in the gospel history as the apostle does could not have been unacquainted with the rest of its chief incidents."*

We need now to remember that all of Paul's letters, with the Acts of the Apostles, are to be taken into this argument if

* See Mair's *Studies in the Christian Evidences*, p. 123.

we would get the complete confirmation of the teaching by the four gospels; to remember also that Saul the persecutor became Paul the Christian between the years 34 A. D. and 37 A. D. With such a man, broad-minded, well disciplined, a religious zealot, a "slaughter-breathing" persecutor; with such a conversion, captured at midday by the Lord himself; tremendously alive to this faith from the hour when he saw Stephen's far-away gaze into heaven to the dread hour when the grim headsman executed that bloody state paper from Nero which made him immortal—it takes a great deal of audacity, and a radical determination to get rid of the supernatural, to deny to this man an accurate knowledge of the essential facts and teaching of those chosen witnesses who went out and in with the Lord for the space of three years, that they might be qualified for the mission of which they were clearly conscious.

One other objection must be noticed.

Even if it be conceded that we have the New Testament of the first century, it may still be objected that there are many thousand variations in the manuscripts from which we get our New Testament. Experts reckon at least one hundred and fifty thousand such variations, and the fair inference seems to be that a book that comes out of such chaos is entirely untrustworthy. But a little study of the subject will lead to the opposite conclusion. A glance at the passage below, taken from John xii, 1–8, will illustrate this point, and furnish the only argument needed:

AUTHORIZED VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.	DOUAY VERSION.
Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spike-	Jesus therefore six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus raised from the dead. So they made him a supper there: and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat with him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very	Jesus therefore six days before the pasch came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life. And they made him a supper there: and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of right spikenard,

AUTHORIZED VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.	DOUAY VERSION.
nard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.	precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, which should betray him, saith, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein. Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying. For the poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always.	of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray him, said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein. Jesus therefore said: Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial, for the poor you have always with you; but me you have not always.

If we compare the Revised Version with the other two we shall find that counting the differences in words used, in arrangement of phrases and sentences, in omissions, additions, and in spelling, there are

at least ten variations in the first verse. The Revised Version begins with the words, "Jesus therefore," and the Authorized Version, with the words, "Then Jesus." The Douay Version uses the briefer word "pasch" for "passover." The Revised Version reads, "whom Jesus raised from the dead;" the Authorized Version, "which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead;" while the Douay Version reads, "where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life." The Douay Version reads, "pasch," the two others, "passover;" the Douay Version spells Bethany, "Bethania." It is quite possible that fifty, and perhaps twice that number of variations, could be made in this selection of eight verses from St. John. Nevertheless it is perfectly clear that the same ideas are communicated in each of the three accounts. Continue the comparison of the Revised Version with these two versions throughout the whole New Testament, and the variations might

run up into the tens of thousands, and yet not affect a single doctrine. If, therefore, we arrange the seventeen hundred and sixty manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts known to New Testament scholars at the time the Revised Version was made, in parallel columns, and carry out this study, the variations might easily run up to one hundred and fifty thousand, as critics say they do. But the study of the above passage shows that they are incidental, accidental, and non-essential. The question of supreme importance is the question upon what these manuscripts agree, and the answer to that question is that they agree upon everything important in doctrine or essential to faith.

The variations which affect any of the teachings of the New Testament are few, and the variations which materially affect any important doctrine may be counted on the fingers of one hand. Indeed, one could make any one of the complete manuscripts or nearly complete manuscripts his

Bible without changing a single article of his faith. If, then, anyone is disposed to make much of these variations in their bearing upon the doctrines of the New Testament, that fact shows a disposition to exaggerate their importance. We may trust the New Testament we have with unwavering confidence. As a result of the work done by devout scholars in giving us the Revised Version we may get nearer the exact ideas of the apostles and the Christ than any generation of biblical students since the close of the first century.

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST AND THE PROPHETS.

THE study of prophecy in its relation to Christ has often been occupied with showing that Christ fulfilled some particular prediction. This aspect of the subject sets forth in a startling way the activity of the Spirit of God upon the mind of the prophet, but it has its limitations. It exhibits only a very small part of the subject, and that part in an isolated way. It is only when we study "prophetism" in a broader way; when we see the prophetic spirit at work in the inner life of a great nation, in its institutions, civil and ecclesiastical; when we see it reaching on through the long centuries, carrying forward from the beginning its lofty spiritual ideals, adapting itself to the successive generations with its warnings and its hopes, touching

and seeking to lift up and ennoble every individual life; it is only when we catch thus a bird's-eye view of its mighty sweep, and the unbroken continuity of its resistless current, that we begin to appreciate its meaning and see its evidential value. This chapter seeks to set forth this great movement rather than the startling fulfillment of particular predictions.

We shall see first of all that the prophetic office was far more common than we have been accustomed to suppose. If the question were asked, "Who were the prophets?" the answer from any well-trained Sunday-school scholar would be: "They were Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel." It is quite doubtful whether we should get the names of Huldah, Urijah, Hanan, Ahijah, Iddo, Jehu, Obed, Gad, Nathan, Saul, and Heman. Balaam would be left out and the great schools of prophets overlooked; and yet we learn that Samuel organized such schools, and from time to time we see them

appearing in large companies. We read in the Book of Kings that when Elijah was about to leave Elisha, and the two stood by the Jordan, "fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood over against them afar off;" * that when Jezebel threatened and destroyed many of the prophets, Obadiah, who feared the Lord, "took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water;" † and again, that "the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men," ‡ to inquire whether he should go up against Ramoth-gilead. It is clear that the vocation of the prophet was much more common than we have been accustomed to suppose.

What, then, are the distinctive characteristics of the prophets? The answer to that question cannot be given in a word. They were preachers of righteousness to their own times; they were social reformers;

* 2 Kings ii, 7. † 1 Kings xviii, 4.
‡ 1 Kings xxii, 6.

they were the incarnate conscience of Israel; they were the "watchdogs" over the spiritual interests of the nation. They differed from the priests in that they dealt with the kernel of righteousness, the spiritual content of individual and national holiness, while the priests developed an external form for that life, through which it wrought upon the times. The priestly teaching had much to say about sacrifices, and the ritual and paraphernalia of sacrifice; it prescribed rules for life, and ran at last into a burdensome ceremonialism which Christ swept away as an intolerable bondage.

The religion of Israel has been called the religion of hope; and such it was if we judge it by the prophet and the role he played in it; but it is a hope which has a very dark background. There is very little to be hoped for the world from the times of the patriarchs, little from that multitude that came out of Egypt. They were ready to go back to Egypt, to the "leeks and the

onions," ready to dance around the calf which Aaron made, lacking apparently in all those heroic qualities so essential to Israel's success. There was little to be hoped from the monarchy. Solomon's brilliant reign culminated in utter collapse of spiritual life; his harem led him into the grossest idolatry, and idolatry sapped the lifeblood of the nation. The division of the monarchy under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, the rapid growth of idolatry, the wickedness and utter barbarity of many of the kings, the rising of the great heathen monarchies, the doom ever impending from Assyria and Chaldea, the long, weary years of captivity, the drift into barren ceremonialism, the utter destruction of the holy city and sacred temple, and the dispersion of the chosen people among all the nations of the earth—what is there in all this side of Israel's history to foster courage or inspire hope? And yet Israel's religion is, above all other things, the religion of hope.

It is at just this point that the prophet appears, and that, too, as the all-important human factor in Israel's religion. He is the man who has light in his own house when every other house is dark as Egypt; he always foresees the day of triumph, and it is his vocation to proclaim it. Scourging, desolation, and captivity must come; but in the path of devastation follow national thrift, the ringing songs of joy, and the jubilant notes of victory. The prophet is God's man; he is called of God and inspired by God; he knows the divine will and the goal toward which Israel moves; he knows that he is the heaven-commissioned herald, sent to proclaim the conquest which Jehovah will make of the nations and the glory which shall be upon Israel.* It is this unique relation to Jehovah which accounts for his hope when the cause seems to be lost, and for his courage when his message seems to be either the foolish fancy of a

*See Isa. lix.

dreamer or the incoherent utterance of a madman.

There are marked gradations among the prophets in their knowledge of God and of his will. As a general principle the earlier prophets are of a lower order than the later. There is more of vengeance and vindictiveness in the manifestations of this gift in the time of the Judges, and less of ethical content in their teaching than in the later prophets. This must not be understood as implying that God's Spirit was not moving upon the people, and guiding the development of their life. It was, indeed, a rough age, but an army with cannon, spreading desolation on every hand, seems sometimes to be necessary in order to make way for righteousness. If God is to work out his will through men he must use such men as he finds in the time to which he comes. The method and means used by a Samson will be largely determined by the hour in which he lives, and by his own character. Samuel hewing Agag to pieces "before

the Lord " is a grim illustration of the age just passing away, and affords a striking contrast to the teaching of Isaiah, who emphasizes the thought that the blessings promised to Israel are to be shared by all the nations; a striking contrast to Jeremiah, who sees that the time is coming when a new covenant will be made, and that the chief consideration under that covenant will be its inwardness—its power over the thought, the heart, and the life.

This principle of growth in revelation has sometimes been so exaggerated as to imply that there can be nothing high or holy in the earliest revelation; and if such teaching be found there it must be relegated to a later time. This is a false idea of the principle. The germs of all the great principles of revelation are found in the oldest Scriptures, and yet they are germs, and sporadic at that; they are little appreciated by the people, and are only to a very limited extent made effective in their lives. Aristotle's principle, " The nature

of that which is, is to be known from its mature condition," is universally applicable. The eagle shows what the eagle's egg did not; the full-grown man what the babe did not; an advanced civilization what a few unorganized tribes cannot; and the revelation shows by this principle of growth how intimately it is related to the method of progress in all life: in the animal, the man, the nation, and in the final civilization which is being wrought out by the race itself. The analogy is as wide as creation. Revelation grows. It took time for Israel to get full possession of the gift of prophecy, and we must therefore look to the later periods of his history for the most perfect manifestations of this gift. This principle, if clearly understood, will contribute to the understanding of many of the difficulties of the earlier Old Testament Scriptures.

In our study of prophecy, remembering that we seek to discover only its more immediate relation to Christ, we need first of

all to fix the point of departure and the goal toward which revelation moves. We find, then, even from the most cursory glance at the prophetic literature, that the eyes of the prophet are always fixed upon that covenant relation entered into between Jehovah and Abram which made Israel a chosen people. Explore these sacred books at any period, from Malachi to Moses; uncover the secret thought of prophet, priest, king, judge, or lawgiver, and you find there that which is so clearly presupposed that it hardly needs to be stated, the frequent declaration and the constant assumption of that favored relation between Jehovah and Israel. In its relations to this *religion of hope* we cannot easily overestimate the fact that the prophetic point of view always presupposes this Jehovah-Abrahamic covenant, and that, too, as an ancient possession from the misty and distant past.

The goal of the prophetic movement is the new covenant which is to be made with

Israel, and which is to be made actual through the coming of the Messiah. A brief study of the prophetic writings would show us the various phases of this goal as it is seen by the several prophets, and also the line of advance made toward the goal.

We may now see the prophetic spirit moving in Israel as we study the method by which this covenant relation becomes planted and rooted in the life and institutions of the people. Such an ideal, in order to become fixed and effective, must be spread among the people, must take possession of their thought and ferment there until it becomes a conviction radical and national; it must become contagious, enkindling the deeper emotions, producing the joy that breaks forth in song and the courage that fears no enemy; it must enter into their institutions, there to mold the whole body of the people; otherwise Abram remains a lone fanatic, and neither Israel nor the race is blessed. This is a

matter of necessity if the divine purpose is to be worked out through men.

Turning to the record, then, we find that long before Israel went down into Egypt there came down from on high upon the soul of an aged man the revelation that in him was wrapped up a great family history. But such a fact could not stand alone; it was too unique, and unique facts are especially in need of favorable conditions. The supernatural of the gospels could not stand if guaranteed only by a known impostor; the supernatural needs the character of Jesus Christ. We may notice that this promise is repeated at critical periods in Abram's faith, and that it became an epoch-making factor in the patriarchal narratives. The first promise is made when Abram leaves his father's house in Haran and goes down into Canaan; it is repeated when Abram and Lot divide the land and Lot turns to the "well-watered plain of Jordan;" it recurs again when Abram complains

that he has no heir through whom the promise may be made good. It is repeated several times in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis, where we have an account of the covenant of circumcision and the promise that Sarai shall bear a son. It always relates to Abram or his family, and is intended to encourage faith and nourish that hope which is big with blessing for Israel and ultimately for the world.

A new factor appears when, some fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, Israel was delivered from the land of bondage and brought into the land of Canaan. The national hope had long been working under false limitations in Egypt; it must have been easy to believe that Jehovah had forgotten his people. To make "bricks without straw," and to feel the stinging crack of the boss's lash; to think that these fat and sleek oppressors serve idols, while I and my brethren, a chosen race, serve Jehovah, was not favorable to the life of faith. The stress

put upon faith by these untoward circumstances appears in the communication made to Moses at the burning bush: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."* What, then, was the effect of this promise and its fulfillment? If by some divine quickening we could look into the inner life of that host on the farther shores of the Red Sea, and especially into that of their leaders, we should see thought shaping itself into definite form concerning God and his resistless power, and hear that thought singing itself out in songs triumphant: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power. Thy right hand, O Lord, dasheth in pieces the en-

* Exod. iii, 7, 8.

emy."* For one glorious moment Jehovah stands confessed, supreme over all the idol gods of Egypt. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them."† We should see the old promise prolific of new results. "Thou in thy mercy hast led the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy habitation."‡ Their confidence in God opened their eyes to the trembling nations round about them. "The peoples have heard, they tremble."§ Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and Canaanites, "Terror and dread falleth upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they are as still as a stone."‖ "God will bring his people into their inheritance." "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."¶ For one blissful moment Israel stands attent,

* Exod. xv, 6. † Exod. xv, 11, 12. ‡ Exod. xv, 13.
§ Exod. xv, 14. ‖ Exod. xv, 16. ¶ Exod. xv, 18.

his thought true, his emotions just, his purpose righteous.

If we remember that the purpose of a revelation and the mission of a prophet is to teach men how to think about God, how to feel and to act toward God, we see that the sublime purposes of a revelation are going steadily forward in the history now before us. Israel is learning this lesson for himself and for the race. The spirit which wrought in the mind of the greater prophets is doing his work effectively and surely. This sublime song will never be forgotten. It echoes and reëchoes in psalm and prophecy; its triumphal notes roll down through all the centuries; it has been an unfailing source of confidence and courage to every generation of believers since that time. It was to Israel's thought and feeling what the redemption of Christ is to our religious consciousness.*

The effect thus produced was deepened and strengthened by the giving of the law

* Riehm's *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 69.

at Sinai and by the preparation for that event. The march to Sinai up through the "great and terrible wilderness," the silence of the desert, the mysterious forms of nature as "they advance deeper and deeper into the mountain ranges, they know not whither," must have been impressive. "Onwards they went, and the mountains closed around them; upwards through winding valley, and under high cliff, and over rugged pass, and through gigantic forms, on which the marks of creation even now seem fresh and powerful," until at last they find themselves assembled in the presence of that massive cliff which rises abruptly out of the plain. They were charged by Moses to make elaborate spiritual preparation; were warned off from the mountain altar under penalty of death; there they stood waiting the sublime communication under the most awe-inspiring circumstances conceivable.* If the prepa-

* See Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, vol. i, p. 165.

ration and the surroundings were impressive, the communication was certainly glorious.

If the deliverance from Egypt emphasized and deepened the sense of God's love and mercy to them, that revelation at Sinai made dreadful his name as a God great and terrible. How shall they dare to put idols into competition with the divine Majesty that spake from Sinai? Lay bare the working of the religious consciousness again, and you will find that Sinaitic law working there, a barrier against ever-impending heathenism with its ever-disintegrating idolatry, and a bulwark against injustice and wrong between man and man. If we would know how deep that revelation cut its way into the bed rock of their national life we may read it in all the later history. That which is so often repeated by psalmist and prophet the New Testament takes up and reiterates: "For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and

darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that no word more should be spoken unto them: for they could not endure that which was enjoined, If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." * That revelation has gone out into all the earth, and its message can never be forgotten: "Jehovah is God, and all the gods of the heathen are vanity." In the background of the long history stands out that terrible mount which lifts its head like a veritable Matterhorn into the heavens. And, whether black with clouds and tempest or shot through with evening sunset and brilliant as a throne of sapphire, the voice of God is always audible there, commanding men off from sin and on toward holiness. The hand of God is upon Israel; the covenant is fixed and dominant; the revelation moves and the hope grows. Is-

* Heb. xii, 18–21.

rael is learning how to think about God, how to feel and act toward God, and what to expect from God. The growth of this religious consciousness is the growth of revelation.

The next important step is the settlement of Israel in the promised land. Up to this time the hope of Israel has worked in a somewhat sporadic way. The years just past have organized the people into a nation, and now, settled upon their own national domain, the religious hope is to work its way with ampler opportunity through great national institutions. The prophet is still and always the center of that hope. He is limited by the spiritual condition of the time in which he works; he is always a preacher of righteousness to his own time; but he is the divinely illuminated man, and the goal is ever before him. A study of this period would show that the driving out of the Canaanites was necessary for the development of Israel's hope. Even with this conquest under-

taken and partially successful, idolatry and intermarriage well-nigh swamped the hope of Israel more than once. Such a study would show that the development of forms of worship produced a religious culture, and helped to root and spread religious ideas; that the civil institutions which grew up mitigated the evils of the time (blood revenge, slavery, and polygamy), and that the great religious festivals sent the blood of the new hope back with the people to the remotest corners of the little theocracy; that the prophets and the prophetic schools kept the public conscience alive, the public thought uneasy over the defections of Israel; and that with the thunderbolts of Jehovah's wrath and the portrayal of Israel's hope they kept the soul of the age vibrating to the old Abrahamic promise: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."* But these lines of thought we can only suggest. God is present in Israel's life, the prophet holds firmly the

* Gen. xii, 3.

principles of life, and keeps the ideal goal in view. He is learning and the people are learning how to think about God, how to feel and act toward God.

The next epoch is the founding of the monarchy under Samuel. He was both prophet and judge. But now another principle, and one that works in all advancing civilizations, appears, namely, the principle of the division of labor. In the time of early settlements in the West a man might be preacher, doctor, teacher, farmer, and blacksmith all at the same time. He must do everything for himself and his family, for the reason that there are none to assume the various duties of society. But this necessity always indicates an undeveloped type of life. As the community advances the several functions of society are assumed by different individuals. Israel is advancing into a more complex, a richer and larger life; is to have the responsibilities of increased wealth; to foster many and varied industries; to be brought

into relations with surrounding nations and be greatly influenced by their life; is to have more comforts and refinements; and it is God's purpose to use this richer and more varied life in the interest of his kingdom. Israel goes from the quiet of the farm to the noise and stir of the city life, with its manifold and inevitable perils and its larger possibilities. The transition is to be made under the monarchy and by the king. Samuel complains that the people have rejected him, and Jehovah says they have rejected Him; but, strange as it may seem, He instructs Samuel to grant their request and consecrate them a king. This only makes more clear the method and the necessity of working out the redemption of man through men. This whole period is full of lessons to the student, and illustrates on a large scale how the spirit of God, working upon the mind of the prophet, took up all the ideas suggested by the larger life and utilized them to set forth God's ways among

men; to break up the old narrow and immoral ideas of earlier times; to develop true ideas of man; to foster a true view of the relation of Israel to other nations, and of Israel's religion to other religions; to teach men how to think about God and how to act and feel toward God. This is the heart of revelation, and along all these lines and many kindred lines of thought the revelation moves forward through the centuries toward Him in whom all the centuries find their meaning.

A few illustrations of the changes that are going on in ideas and ideals will make clear the essential lines of progress.

In the earlier periods of Israel's history there was a lack of moral quality in the prevalent moral standards. In the time of the Judges the standards of relation between man and his fellow-men, especially between Israel and outside nations, can hardly be called moral at all. The Book of Judges is one long bloody record of crime, savagely brutal and brutally in-

human. Ehud, that left-handed Benjamite, with his two-edged sword concealed, obtains audience with Eglon, king of the Moabites, offers him a present, and buries the deadly weapon, haft and all, in the vitals of the king. Then Israel is summoned to the fords of the Jordan, and there they smite of the Moabites "about ten thousand men, every lusty man, and every man of valor; and there escaped not a man."* Jael, the wife of Heber, invites the fleeing Sisera to her hospitable home, hides him under a rug, gives him water and milk to drink, and then drives the tent-pin with swinging hammer and joyful heart clear through the royal head, "and so he died."

And Deborah sings her jubilant song:

Blessed above woman shall Jael be,
The wife of Heber the Kenite,
Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.
He asked water, and she gave him milk;
She brought him butter in a lordly dish.
She put her hand to the nail,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;

* Judg. iii, 29.

And with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote through his head,
Yea, she pierced and struck through his temples.
At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay:
At her feet he bowed, he fell:
Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.*

And still she sings of the desolation that came to the mother of Sisera, waiting and watching, listening for the rumbling of his chariot wheels:

Through the window she looked forth, and cried,
The mother of Sisera cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?
Her wise ladies answered her,
Yea, she returned answer to herself,
Have they not found, have they not divided the spoil?
A damsel, two damsels to every man;
To Sisera a spoil of divers colors,
A spoil of divers colors of embroidery,
Of divers colors of embroidery on both sides, on the necks of the spoil?
So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord:
But let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.
And the land had rest forty years.†

All ethical relations are conceived in a low, savage way, even by the chosen people. They seemed, however, to have one

* Judg. v, 24–27. † Judg. v, 28–31.

saving merit: they knew that Jehovah was God, that his enemies must perish, and they fought out their faith according to the code of war which obtained at the time. The instances given afford the most striking illustration of the lack of knowledge of morals. But there must be a preparation in ideas if Christ is to get a hearing for his teaching. A preacher of the Sermon on the Mount would have been treated in that age to the gospel of Jael's tent-pin, or to Ehud's left-handed gospel which glittered concealed and restless under his cloak.

This limitation of moral obligations, which could tolerate such barbarity, is gradually overcome; the progress is very slow, but we do reach a time when, according to Isaiah, the nations are to "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."*

* Isa. ii, 4.

In that view a new ethical principle obtains, and one which, widely propagated, prepares the way for the teaching of Him who is a brother to every man, and who has made all men brethren.

The ideas of righteousness were external and inadequate. We may see evidence of this externality in the promises and curses recorded in Deut. xxviii. The rewards and penalties are all external. This was a necessity and served a wise purpose; but it is still a fact that the deeper root and meaning of righteousness was little appreciated. This fact is made evident, not only by the dreadful deeds approved, but also by the drift into empty ceremonialism; by the substitution of sacrifices for heart service, the blood of bulls and goats for obedience. These ideas of righteousness must be changed if Christ's ideas are to prevail. That they are displaced by ideas which set forth human relations as they ought to exist is made clear by the later prophets. Amos's indictment of Israel

comes from the heights: "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it? I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." *

Amos understands perfectly that righteousness is an inward condition of the heart. There can be no acceptable sacrifice that discounts right conduct. Christ can build on the truths taught by Amos and fulfill the expectations and hopes rooted in those ideas and propagated by him and his coadjutors. A new consciousness is stirring among the prophets of

* Amos v, 20–24.

this time, a consciousness luminous with the deepest ethical principles.

In the earlier history of Israel the individual is swallowed up in the nation. That this was an important and necessary provision in the development of Israel's life is quite clear; but that it resulted, on the other hand, in low and false estimates of the individual, and in false estimates of the nature of holiness, is made quite evident both in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. The Jews of Christ's time, who seemed to think it was enough to be able to say, "We have Abraham to our father," illustrate this misconception, and the lack of balance between the individual and the people. Holiness is a characteristic of persons, and not of nations, except as the persons that compose the nation are holy. Holiness is an attitude of mind, a condition of heart, a bearing of the will. If these are antagonistic to God, there is no possible way of thinking such a man holy.

But if Christ's idea of righteousness as

we learn it from his life and his Sermon on the Mount is ever to get a footing, it is quite essential that this older idea should be corrected by a truer notion of the personal character of holiness. And as we look through the eyes of the prophets we discover the steady advance in this direction and hear at length Jeremiah saying:

> Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.*

This language of Jeremiah carries us to that inward view of righteousness which is so startlingly set forth by Christ in the

* Jer. xxxi, 31–34.

Sermon on the Mount, and shows us another line of progress toward the Messiah.

Another illustration of this progress is in the advance toward a true universalism. We have certain prolific phases of this preparation in the clearer recognition of holiness as a personal matter. If holiness were a form of service to be rendered at a given time and place, whether at Jerusalem or any other holy city; if it were a condition of soul for which the Jew is peculiarly qualified and the Gentile peculiarly disqualified, then there could be no universal Gospel. This misapprehension is abundantly illustrated in Israel's history, and is the prevalent doctrine among many of the best and wisest of the heathen philosophers. But progress in the knowledge of God is always accompanied by progress in the knowledge of man. Man as created in the image of God is a person, a moral being, with intellect, moral emotions, and will, capable of a freely chosen, self-directed life. This an-

cient germ of anthropology, which teaches that man was made in the image of God, is great both with evolution and revolution. To stand thus for God is to stand with capacities for moral action, with duties corresponding thereto, and the social environment must be turned and overturned until it fits and fosters this high destiny. That the moral principles widely cherished in Israel's earlier history are very far from this conception of man which makes a universal gospel possible is evident. Let us try to sum up the content of this chapter, and make clear what we have gained. We have seen the promise made to Abraham, rooted and fixed in the national life by two great events, namely, the deliverance from Egypt and the giving of the law at Sinai. We have seen the settlement of Canaan and the organization of the monarchy, and under these new conditions the many-sided national life unfolded, and as the central figure and factor in this life we have seen the prophet. What has

he done? He has changed the unethical standards of the time of the Judges into the true ethical principles of the time of Isaiah and his coadjutors; he has changed the conception of holiness as an external thing to the conception of holiness as a condition of the inner man; he has shown that holiness is personal and not natural; he has made the hope of the Israelite a hope for the race.

Stirred by contact with the nations of the earth, weeping at times over impending doom, hurling the thunderbolts of Jehovah's wrath upon the sacrilegious marauder, cursing the disturbers of Israel's peace, never forgetting the chastisements which Israel deserves, meting them out in full measure upon recreant king and abandoned idolater, the prophet, illuminated from on high, is ever rising on faith's broad wing out of the darkness of a hopeless present to the loftiest summits of vision. He sees the dividing lines among the nations fading away, and sweeps the whole

earthly horizon in that sublime universalism, the blessing of Abraham, a blessing for all men. Isaiah's soul burns with gospel grace while he sings:

And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

Again Isaiah represents the servant of Jehovah as sprinkling many nations, as given for a witness to the peoples, "a leader and commander to the peoples." Jehovah delights in him. His spirit is upon him. "He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." "He shall not fail or be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law."

Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; he that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth

* Isa. ii, 2, 3.

breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I, the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

In the inspired thought of the prophets the Abrahamic hope has worked itself free from all national limitations, and the true universalism of the promise appears.

And now, from the height we have gained, we are prepared to see the full meaning of those marvelous predictive utterances which shine along the centuries like stars in the night. Consider the promise made to Abraham, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Think of the vision of Balaam, son of Beor, that heathen seer who could not curse Israel:

> He saith, which heareth the words of God,
> And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,
> Which seeth the vision of the Almighty,
> Falling down, and having his eyes open:
> I see him, but not now:

* Isa. xlii, 5–7.

I behold him, but not nigh :
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners of Moab,
And break down all the sons of tumult.
And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir also shall be a possession, *which were* his enemies ;
While Israel doeth valiantly.
And out of Jacob shall one have dominion,
And shall destroy the remnant from the city.*

Recall the coming prophet of whom Moses speaks, and whom Israel shall hear.

The Messianic hope early becomes attached to the tribe of Judah. The prophet Micah with startling definiteness points out the birthplace of the coming ruler: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." † The Book of Ruth gives us "the original history of the Bethlehemitic family from which David came," and seems to have been written to preserve the

* Num. xxiv, 16–19. † Micah v, 2.

origin of that going forth of which Micah speaks. The national hope became attached to David's family (as recorded in 2 Sam. vii, 1 Chron. xvii) when he proposed to build a house for the Lord. He was forbidden to do this by the prophet Nathan, but was assured of "an everlasting hereditary possession of the throne under God's fatherly protection." The psalmist sees the nations arrayed against this coming king, but Jehovah holds them in derision and says:

Yet I have set my king
Upon my holy hill of Zion.

I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said unto me, Thou art my son;
This day have I begotten thee.
Ask of me, and I will give *thee* the nations for thine inheritance,
And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

Isaiah portrays in most sublime language the majestic character of the king and the permanence of the kingdom when he writes:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his

* Psalm ii, 6–8.

name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this.*

What shall we make of all these predictions? Had these predictions been left isolated sayings we should hardly have been able to find their meaning. But they are a part of a system of thought and a method of revelation which run through long centuries and work in the life of a whole nation. They are, therefore, to be interpreted in relation to that life and that revelation. While we must be on our guard not to put into the mind of the writer or speaker what was not in his mind—the first duty of an interpreter is to discover the mind of the writer—we must also be on our guard lest we be hypercritical and eliminate from the record the divine thought that is made evident by the course and outcome of his-

* Isa. ix, 6, 7.

tory. History reveals the thought of God as the prophets themselves did not understand it. As a matter of fact there is more of divine guidance than of human foresight in the life of Israel; there is a larger and richer purpose than was ever dreamed of even by the most favored prophet.

There is little space left to consider the most remarkable passage in all the prophetic literature, namely, the passage found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, where he portrays the suffering servant of Jehovah. The purpose of God has been at work in the nation, and has fixed itself with perfect definiteness in an ideal king, a king that shall rule in righteousness and rule eternally. Under the inspiration of the divine Spirit the prophetic mind has wrought upon the character of this king from the time of Samuel. He has been steadily lifted above the individual kings of the house of David, and the beneficence of his reign has been extended beyond the national horizon until it covers the whole

earth. Indeed, the nation that will not serve him must perish.

But there is another line of development that has to do with this king conceived as the *suffering servant of Jehovah.* All the sacrificial ceremonies are developed on the principle of mediation. The sacrificial literature expresses that principle in a variety of ways. The sins of the people are confessed on the head of the scapegoat, as though sin could be carried over from the guilty soul to the dumb and innocent creature ; and then, by the hands of a trusty man, this dumb beast is led away into an unknown land. This is the dramatized form of the doctrine of atonement in its practical outcome. The whole people came to feel that sin could be put away. The mind of the prophet is often engaged with this profound theme. The problem has been to unite the various phases of truth that have hitherto run on quite independent of each other. How shall the prophet unite the sacrificial side of his sys-

tem with its regal side? How shall he unite the conception of the *suffering servant of Jehovah*, in whom the whole import of the sacrificial system is summed up, with the idea of Him whose name is called "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God," with him upon whose shoulders rests the government of this eternal kingdom? Up to the time of Isaiah the prophet seems never to have been able to bring together the many-sided truth in one all-comprehensive concept. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah the prophet at last grasps the whole content of prophecy by the root. All other prophetic truth starts from it, and from it springs anew the rejuvenated hope of Israel. As we find the servant of Jehovah described in chapters xl–xlviii, it is clear that the prophet has the whole nation in mind. But when we come to that section of prophecy included in chapters xlix and liii the prophet has narrowed his conception; the servant of Jehovah is no longer the whole nation, but

the "faithful remnant," that part of the nation that has remained uncontaminated by the environment of a foreign land. Through this remnant restoration is to be wrought out, atonement provided, and Israel is to become the bearer of blessings to the world.

But the prophet seems ever on the point of breaking through this idea of the remnant; the bold personification of the idea is so vivid, the radical contrast of the actual condition of Israel with the assured ideal condition is so striking, that the reader almost expects, as he reads, to hear the name of this servant announced, by whom Jehovah will realize the ideal. It is not announced, but his character is so clearly portrayed, his origin, rejection, humiliation, suffering, trial and condemnation, death and burial, and the victory that shall come out of his death are so vividly described, that one can almost see the inscription above the cross: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews."* The sacri-

* Matt. xxvii, 37.

ficial types have at last found their meaning. The scattered rays of light converge in the cross of Christ. There is foresight here that neither wisest sage nor inspired prophet ever fully mastered.

One can but feel the solemn music of these stately days of Israel's history. The master prophet now sits at the great organ and feels his way up toward the sublime theme. He has given us in low and plaintive prelude the Lord's charge against Israel: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." * He has comforted Israel with the mellow music of God's unfailing grace; † he has set the wrath of God ablaze in weird tones that smell of conflagration; ‡ a few thrilling trumpet-blasts have been sent echoing over the deserts against hostile Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Egypt, and Moab; § and ever and anon, in the midst of this reveling chaos of wild music, you catch recurrent

* Isa. i, 2. † Isa. iv. ‡ Isa. v, 24. § Isa. xiii–xxiii.

notes pure and clear as an angel's voice.* Is it an angel's song?

The musician feels his theme; the mighty music has taken possession of the man, and on the floodtide of his ocean-deep diapasons he carries you down, down, into the deep darkness, with him who was "smitten of God and afflicted," "bruised for our iniquities," "oppressed," and "dumb," cut off for our transgressions; with him who "poured out his soul an offering for sin." The tragic music rolls its pathetic impassioned minor down and on; the servant of Jehovah, the hope of Israel, lies buried, "his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death." We are lost in the gloom. But the musician is not lost. The processes of life eternal are stirring in that grave. He touches the organ again. A note of triumph responds, "He divides the spoil with the strong." Even now the conquered is a conqueror. There is the tramp of armies

* Isa. xxii.

in the trumpet-tones which summon Israel to sing; to "break forth into singing;" to spread abroad and possess the nations; to behold them gathered with their wealth and glory unto Israel's king; for, says the prophet, "the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" "the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."*

When Isaiah has completed his work, there is little to be added to give us the living picture of the Messiah. We only need the touch of the evangelists to add a little more color to the cheek, to kindle a little more light in the eye, and to sound for us the quality of that matchless voice, and we have before us the Son of man, the Son of God. And as we stand among the men of his time we feel the trembling expectation alive in every heart. Rome felt it. The Magi felt it in the far East. All Judaism felt it. Whence comes this long-expected one? Standing with

* See Isa. liii and liv.

him at the cross we can easily see the line of light from the star which Balaam saw, reflected in the star which led the Magi to the Babe in Bethlehem, and we do not wonder that the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." This wonderful movement in the life of a whole nation extending over a period of eighteen centuries; this advance from the lowest ethical standards to the highest, from the conception of righteousness as external and national to a conception of it as internal and personal; this movement which breaks all national barriers and becomes a revelation of hope for all men, has one rational explanation. It is found in the language of Jesus of Nazareth: "Before Abraham was I am." In order to get its bearing upon our subject we need to ask in the light of it, Is our faith in Jesus rational?

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

THAT Jesus wrought miracles we are assured by the constant testimony of the four evangelists and by the testimony of Paul the apostle. This evidence is a stumbling-block to all those that deny the supernatural. Paulus denies it, but is obliged to acknowledge that his followers *thought* he worked miracles, Renan denies it, and is obliged to assume that he *pretended* to work miracles, but did it unwillingly and almost petulantly.

Strauss denies it, and seeks to cut his way out of the difficulty by assuming that the records we have were written at some time far down in the second century, and that the miraculous phases of the records are "embellishments" added between the lifetime of Jesus and the date of that

writing. And since, according to his view, the eyewitnesses could not have been deceived, we must infer that these additions were made after the eyewitnesses had passed away. But the progress of criticism has tended steadily to show that the gospels were written in the first century. That question we need not discuss, as we have the incontrovertible testimony of Paul in his four universally accepted epistles, to the gist of the whole matter. He assumes to have worked miracles himself, and also assumes that it is a matter not in debate in the churches to which he writes.

Hume denies the supernatural, and claims that universal experience is against the truth of miracles. The whole case is summed up by Strauss, and we will give his words.

He affirms that a gospel narrative cannot be regarded as historical "when the narrative is irreconcilable with the known and universal laws which govern the course

of events; " and in elaboration of this criterion he says: " When therefore we meet with an account of certain phenomena or events of which it is either expressly stated or implied that they were produced immediately by God himself (divine apparitions, voices from heaven and the like), or by human beings possessed of supernatural powers (miracles, prophecies), such an account is *in so far* to be considered as not historical." * This is the position fairly stated of both Paulus and Renan, and, indeed, the implication of all those that controvert the gospel narrative at this point.

There are certain general considerations relative to the supernatural which will serve to set the whole subject in a true light. It is the purpose of the present chapter to give the subject as it appears in the New Testament its true setting. And in the first place we may ask, What is meant by the supernatural or the miraculous?

* See *Life of Jesus*, vol. i, p. 71.

If we fix our thought upon some one New Testament miracle and explain it, we shall get the clearest idea of the subject. Take the case of blind Bartimæus, as recorded in Mark x, 46–52. In answer to Jesus's question, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" the blind beggar prays, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." And Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And straightway he received his sight, and followed him in the way." This is a miracle for the reason that it compels us to believe that the agency of God is involved in an extraordinary way. When then the Almighty departs from his ordinary course of action in the realm of nature, by which he makes its laws continuous, to do a unique thing, since we cannot explain the event by referring it to the causes that work in nature, we refer it to the immediate act of the Almighty. Whether, then, we speak of miracles or of supernatural events, we mean such events

as point to a unique act of the Almighty and an act which we are forced to believe is in the interest of the revelation of his character and purposes to man.

The question has been raised whether miracles are necessary to a revelation. That men may come to believe in God apart from miracles is by no means impossible. The character of Jesus and his ethical teaching may provide a reasonable ground for faith. But that the belief in miracles has served a very important purpose is certain; we know what the effect of this belief was upon Israel. It is doubtful if Christ would have gotten a hearing at all had he not at least seemed to meet the expectations that the prophets had created concerning the Messiah. They had been teaching that the Messiah would work miracles. The people expected this evidence of his Messiahship and were constantly asking for it. Suppose he had not *pretended* to meet that demand, what would have been the effect upon their faith? Miracles

have an important function to-day. There is a disposition on the part of many students of nature to explain everything under the law of mechanism. Many go so far as to substitute law for love and power for personality as the ultimate ground of all things. They make the "promise and potency" of matter responsible for every event in the history of the whole cosmic movement and in the history of the race as well.

We know that this theory breaks down when applied to man. We know that we are responsible. By analogy we are led to predicate some such free power back of the events of history, and of the cosmic order. But once establish a miraculous event like that of healing blind Bartimæus, and the theory of an all-embracing mechanical scheme which swallows up and is responsible for every event in history, whether of the world, the race, or the individual, is shattered. Miracles help us on beyond cosmic order to God. Supernatural events

serve to open spiritual vision. Paul saw more while he was blind than Saul with open eyes.

We need to be on our guard against another misunderstanding and vitiating assumption. It is not necessary to assume that violence is done to nature's laws in order to reach a supernatural result. Man, by the power of his free will, is constantly coming down upon nature and carrying her on to ends she never could have reached. Nature never invented a telephone or a steam engine. Man did her no violence when he achieved these results. The exercise of our own free power is a perpetual illustration of the probable method of the supernatural in its relation to the world of nature, and balks at once the objector who talks loudly of "violence."

With these cautionary words against misunderstandings we may now add that it is necessary to see these supernatural events in relation to the system of philosophy and history to which they belong.

Every interpretation of a Scripture text by the process of isolation is a misinterpretation. The meaning of every text is determined by its context. It carries in its soul the time, the place, the speaker, and the whole environment. Abraham Lincoln cannot be understood in isolation. He must be set down in Springfield, Ill., and carried through the great war; or, better still, must be seen in the log cabin of his boyhood, followed through his whole career to his grave; must be seen in the light of history yet to be made. The competency of a witness is not to be determined by isolating him; that would be both false and fatal. A general does not usually allow the enemy to take his men out man by man and shoot them down at his leisure. The supernatural events of the New Testament belong to a system of philosophy. They are not consistent with any form of materialism or pantheism. They go well with the theory that there is a God and that this world and all its activities are dependent upon

him. There is no rational theory of the universe that can shut out from its forces or its laws the fundamental power or being upon whom the universe depends. If this power be *only power*, it still works in the vast all, in every deed and emotion, word and volition. If it be the eternal God, nature and history must express his ideas and work his will. He can modify either force or action, fact or law.

The teaching of modern philosophy, on God's relation to the world, is intimately related to this subject. It has often, if not always, been the case that the denier of miracles has been tainted either with a deistic philosophy, which puts God far away from the universe and creates a kind of presupposition that he would not come down to interfere in the affairs of this world, or with a pantheistic philosophy, by which the freedom of God is compromised and God himself is under the sweep and dominion of an all-engulfing mechanism. But if man be free and responsible the latter

theory is irrational, and in the light of modern philosophy the former is improbable. There is a wide unanimity of opinion among modern philosophers in the doctrine that God is immanent in the universe. Herbert Spencer calls the ground of the universe "the Unknowable;" Matthew Arnold calls it "the power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." In both cases the agent is immanent.

Paul expresses the gist of modern philosophy in the following words: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."* And the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes to the same effect when he speaks of Christ as "upholding all things by the word of his power."† If God be thus immanent in this world, as both Scripture and philosophy teach, and if he is carrying history forward to its goal, as both evolution and Christianity teach, then the question of miracles stands on very different ground. Nature is then

* Acts xvii, 28. † Heb. i, 3.

always the expression of his immanent power. He will modify its forces and carry them to different results if the end to be reached demand such modification.

The immanence of God in the on-going universe robs the improbability of supernatural events of half its force, inasmuch as that improbability is grounded in Deism or Pantheism.

There are several other phases of this setting which claim attention. We *know* that the gospel system is the culmination of a long-continued and most extraordinary historic movement. Consider how the national hope originated and rooted itself in the conscious life of Israel; note the tenacity of that hope in spite of bondage, captivity, idolatry, dissension, and national disaster; read the decalogue of Moses, and compare it with the ten granite ribs which form and support the graceful body of all modern civilization; look through the animated eyes of the prophet; hear the world uttering the prayers, making the

confessions, and singing the triumphant songs of David; and then connect this history with Him who was the desire of all nations, and we are compelled to see that the extraordinary events of the New Testament do not stand entirely alone. They belong to a system. We know, too, the nineteen centuries of history which have followed. When seen in the light of Israel's hope it, too, is extraordinary. We must not allow the objector to carry off the facts and bury them one by one, nor to draw off the witnesses and shoot them down alone.

Renan tells us that Jesus *pretended* to work miracles, but that he did it unwillingly. It is true that Jesus would not allow a false and exaggerated estimate to be put upon miracles; but unless we are to deny the testimony of the witnesses altogether, on the ground of incompetency, we are compelled to admit that Jesus wrought many miracles; that he did it willingly, and with a purpose. He sends

the messengers from John back with the answer: "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them." * He condemns the cities of the plain because they repented not: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."† The miracles of Jesus are so inextricably connected with his teaching that they cannot be separated. They belong to a system of truth.

What is to be said concerning the ability of these writers to create such a character as that of Jesus of Nazareth? Is this masterpiece of the ages, which no Goethe or Shakespeare has matched, which is uni-

* Matt. xi, 4, 5. † Matt. xi, 21.

versally conceded to be without flaw, which has been the admiration and the despair of the ages, the invention of these evangelists? In answer to this question we may observe the impression Jesus has made upon some of the great minds of the ages. John Stuart Mill writes: "But who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus or of imagining the life and character revealed in the gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; as certainly not St. Paul. . . .Religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching upon this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity." Strauss says that Jesus stands foremost among those who have given a higher ideal to humanity. Renan writes: "This sublime person, who each day still presides over the destiny of the world, may be called divine, not in the sense that Jesus has absorbed all the divine, but in the sense that Jesus is the person who has impelled

his fellow-men to make the greatest step toward the divine." And on the next page Renan asks very suggestively: "Will great originality be born again, or will the world henceforth content itself by following the paths opened by the bold original minds of antiquity? We do not know. In any case Jesus will not be surpassed. His worship will constantly renew itself, his history will provoke endless pious tears, his sufferings will subdue the stoutest hearts; all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men no one has been born greater than Jesus." Have our Galilean fishermen then outdone Shakespeare, and given us a character that has impressed friend and foe alike, as a character altogether exceptional and unique? Is Jean Paul Richter correct when he writes: "Jesus, the purest among the mighty, the mightiest among the pure, with his pierced hand raised empires off their hinges, turned the stream of the centuries out of its channel, and still commands the ages. . . .

Only one spirit of surpassing power of heart stands alone, like the universe, by the side of God. For there stepped once upon the earth a unique being, who merely by the omnipotence of holiness subdued strange ages and founded an eternity peculiarly his own. Blooming softly, obedient as the sunflower, yet burning and all-attracting as the sun, with his own gentle might he moved and directed himself and peoples and centuries at the same time toward Him who is the original and universal Sun. That is the gentle Spirit whom we call Jesus Christ. If he really existed then there is a Providence, or he himself were Providence?" Richter is altogether correct.

One does not wonder at Paulus, who, when accused of regarding Christ as a mere man, "sprang suddenly from his seat and replied with great passion and glowing eyes, 'That is an unjust statement, which people are not weary of repeating against me! Believe me, that I never look up to

the Holy One on the cross without sinking in deep devotion before him. No; he is not a mere man, as other men. He was an extraordinary phenomenon, altogether peculiar in his character, elevated high above the whole human race, to be admired; yea, to be adored!'" We come back at last to the matchless character of the Lord Jesus. It bears upon this question of the supernatural in all its phases.

It is evident beyond dispute that these Galilean fishermen have surpassed all the Raphaels, the Angelos, the Goethes, and Shakespeares, for the reason that they saw their model, and recorded what they saw. The picture is incomparable, a picture of transcendent power and beauty. They could paint it as they saw it; they could not invent it. But such a unique character may very consistently be possessed of altogether unique powers. If we see the original witnesses in the places they actually occupied, and hear them under the

conditions in which they spoke, we shall be rather surprised if they have nothing to tell us of words beyond the wisdom of men and of deeds beyond the power of men.

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST'S SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

WE have often heard the question asked, "What think ye of Christ?" Perhaps we have never definitely asked ourselves the question: "What did Christ think of himself?" We know the experiences of our own inner life from consciousness, but the inner life of others by inference from what they do and say. In like manner we may get at the inner life of Jesus by studying his words, his deeds, and his plans. We cannot fathom the depths of his nature, but from a study of the great outstanding facts of his life we may, with a good degree of assurance, answer the question raised, "What did Jesus think of himself?"

No argument can be half so impress-

ive as that furnished by the New Testament narratives themselves. If we turn to Matt. xxi we find the following account of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem:

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and came unto Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring *them* unto me. And if any one say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

Tell ye the daughter of Zion,
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee,
Meek, and riding upon an ass,
And upon a colt the foal of an ass.

And the disciples went, and did even as Jesus appointed them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their garments; and he sat thereon. And the most part of the multitude spread their garments in the way; and others cut branches from the trees, and spread them in the way. And the multitudes that went before him, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, Who is this? And the multitudes said, This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.*

* Matt. xxi, 1-11.

We find the following account of his visit to Nazareth and his appearance in the synagogue :

> And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written,
>
> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor :
> He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.
>
> And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down : and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears.*

What must have been his thought of himself as he rode that day in the midst of that triumphal procession into Jerusalem! The accompanying multitude, with their palm branches and their ringing shouts, "Hosanna to the Son of David," show how they understood him. As he

* Luke iv, 16–21.

stood in the little synagogue at Nazareth among his old friends and neighbors and declared concerning the lesson from Isaiah, "To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears," * what was his thought?

In order to fully appreciate Christ's thought of himself in these acts we need to remember, first of all, that he had been thoroughly trained from his youth in the Hebrew Scriptures. They were his only Bible. He knew them from Genesis to Malachi. His mother early taught him the history of the Israelitish people, the covenant with Abraham and the promise connected therewith, the bondage in Egypt and the deliverance at the Red Sea, and of the expectations concerning the coming Messianic King. From childhood he had sung these Messianic psalms, which portray in glowing imagery the prosperity of Israel under the Messiah's reign, and the wide extent of his dominion over all the nations of the earth. His soul had often been thrilled

* Luke iv, 21.

with the trumpet-tones of Isaiah ; and looking through the anointed eyes of the rapt prophet, he had seen the nations flowing toward Mount Zion, to learn of Israel's king, and to worship in the mountain of the Lord's house. He had read of the extension of his beneficent reign over the Gentiles and of the rich Gentile kings coming bending with their gifts unto him. He had brooded over the sacrifices, had seen this Messianic king as the suffering servant of Jehovah, treading the wine press alone. We need to mark well these facts and perceive clearly their implication. We must note further that this triumphal rôle was no accident, it was not forced upon him, it was deliberately planned.

The people once thought to take him and make him king, but the time was not ripe, and he would not permit it.

But at length the hour came. He sent two of his disciples to bring a colt ; he assured them that if any one objected they would only need to say that the Lord

hath need of him. He evidently intended that they should understand his act just as they did understand it.

In the other passage to which we have referred he assumed that all those gracious hopes expressed by the prophets in their most exalted moments are fulfilled in him. The audacity of his assumption was very clear to the people that heard him in the little synagogue. The Jews understood the meaning of his position and sought to kill him. They did not know of the power that wrought in his soul or of the revelation that was luminous in his consciousness, as to who he was and for what he had come.

His attitude toward nature is startling, even quite unique, and yet there is a solemn quiet, a strange reserve and consistency about it all. He assumes that nature is perfectly plastic to his touch and all her forces obedient to his will. He turns the water into wine without ostentation; he feeds the multitudes with the scanty loaves and fishes without noise; he heals all sorts

of bodily maladies—deafness, blindness, dumbness, paralysis—without remedies; he calms the turbulent waves without effort; he commands without hesitation, and grim death loosens his hold, and Lazarus walks again among his friends. The four gospels constantly presuppose this attitude of authority over nature which we have claimed for Jesus. And Paul's testimony on the subject as it appears in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians is beyond dispute.

In order to get the bearing of this evidence upon Christ's self-consciousness, conceive of him as taking this attitude toward nature. I have heard of an insane man that claimed he could make the window open at his command. The window would not obey. But how did Jesus think of himself when, standing on the deck of that little vessel, he said to the waves, "Peace, be still?" Or, when standing among the friends of the dead Lazarus, he said, "Lazarus, come forth?" Did he

expect to be obeyed? Go out and stand upon the shore of the lake lashed by the tempest; or look into the face of your friend four days dead and measure the stupendous assumptions of the man that attempts to play the rôle of the Lord of nature.

We might argue the sinlessness of Jesus from the pure and holy influence he has exerted in the world, and there would be force in such an argument. His doctrines cannot be changed except to compromise them. His life as we know it cannot be improved. But such high moral teaching and such a moral life as is portrayed in the Gospel demands a sinless source. The purity of the fountain determines the purity of the stream, but the argument cannot be developed here. We must go directly to the claims he makes for himself. He taught that he did always those things that were well-pleasing to his Father. He raised the question which even the purest man does not ask, "Which of you

convinceth me of sin?"* He impressed his disciples with the belief that he was sinless. He passed through the severest tests of character, but we have no evidence that he ever swerved from the law of holiness. In outward act, in temper, in courageous endurance, in every virtue, he stands spotless and inimitable. He never repented or prayed to be forgiven. Here is the suspension of a law which has held its unyielding sway over every individual of the race; but in Jesus, as he went out and in among men for thirty-three years, sin was dethroned. What a luminous hour is that in the dark history of the centuries! Sin dethroned in one life, but dominant again with its vicious dominance in the soul of every man from the cross on Calvary until the year 1894! No wonder that the calendar of the centuries dates now from the hour of the angel's song. The law of sin suspended! That was a miracle more potent far than any wrought

* John viii, 46.

upon blind eyes, paralytic limbs, or dead bodies.

In harmony with all this he assumes the prerogative to forgive sin. He said to the sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." * The scribes were startled and asked, "Who can forgive sin but one, even God?" † This is a divine prerogative. How did he think of himself in this act? Was he playing a part? Impossible. There was the clear light in his consciousness of an authority the Almighty has committed to no other. The Messiah of prophecy! The Lord of nature! The man that dared to forgive sin! They seem to belong together.

We may easily pass from his sinlessness and the right he claims to forgive sin to the authority he assumes over the souls of men. Other men have commanded men in the name of God and by the authority of the truth. The prophets of old could curse the nation that did not

* Mark ii, 5. † Mark ii, 7.

obey God, but Jesus Christ assumes a very different attitude. He teaches the Jews that they could not have life because they would not come unto him. Is he the source of spiritual life to the Jew? He teaches that men are to find eternal life by believing in him. And is he thus the fountain of life eternal to all men? He teaches that his claim must be put before that of the dearest earthly friends and even before life itself. A man must be ready to forsake houses and lands, father and mother, and wife and children, if need be, to meet *his* claim. Is his claim really the final claim upon moral beings, and must every other claimant bow down to him?

If we study his relation to his apostles and disciples, what do we find? He devotes three years to the inculcation of the principles of his kingdom. He then informs them that they are to be witnesses for him, beginning at Jerusalem and continuing through Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, and to the utmost parts of the earth. They

were to fear nothing, neither kings nor councils, nor death itself. They were to take no equipment. In him they had the guarantee of all authority and of all power.* Measure the meaning of the great commission. How did he dare to assume such responsibility? What thought did he entertain of himself in making this venture against the prejudice of the Jews, the fickleness of his disciples, the selfishness of the human heart, the obduracy of the human will, against the sin and sinfulness of the race? And what do the centuries say of the venture? They stand as witnesses to say: "We have been illuminated by the light that shone in his soul, and lifted Godward by the power of which he must have been clearly conscious."

If there were anything yet more startling in his inner life, it was the attitude he dared to assume toward Jehovah.

Says Horace Bushnell: "Imagine a human creature saying to the world, 'I came

* See Matt. x, 25–30, and Matt. xxviii, 16–20.

from the Father,' 'ye are from beneath, I am from above,' facing all the intelligence and philosophy of the world, and saying in bold assurance, 'Behold a greater than Solomon is *here*,' 'I am the light of the world.' Hear him promising openly in his death, 'I will draw all men unto me;' addressing the infinite Majesty and testifying, 'I have glorified thee on the earth;' calling to the human race, 'Come unto me;' 'follow me.'" "What figure," says Bushnell, "would a man present in such language, 'I and the Father?' He goes even beyond this, and apparently without any thought of excess or presumption; classing himself with the divine Majesty in a common plural he says, '*We* will come unto him and make *our* abode with him.' Imagine any, the greatest and holiest of mankind, any prophet or apostle, saying *we*, of himself and the great Jehovah!" Is it true that before Abraham was he was? Is it true that he was somehow connected with the

unfoldment of a great revelation which culminated at last in his incarnation?

If so, then many otherwise inexplicable things have become explicable: prophecy and its fulfillment; the visit of the Magi and the songs of the angels; the inimitable words and the matchless character; the sinlessness and the miracles; the audacious assumptions and the corresponding achievements; the trend of modern history and the hope of the modern world—these all find easy and natural relations with him who was at once the Son of God and the Son of Mary. When Jesus is allowed to stand as he presents himself to the thought of his apostles and the thought of the Church, the whole movement of revelation from Abraham to the cross, and from the cross until the present hour, becomes supremely reasonable. The profoundest question of the ages is this: What did Christ think of himself? The most practical question of the age is this: What do *we* think of Christ?

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST AND THE RESURRECTION.

EVERY conceivable hypothesis has been tried on this doctrine of the resurrection, and every hypothesis has proved a failure except the gospel hypothesis, that Christ died and rose again from the dead and is alive for evermore. The old charge that the disciples stole the body while the guards slept was abandoned long ago. When we remember that that old Roman jailer at Philippi proposed to kill himself* because he had allowed the prisoners under his charge to escape, we shall see how weak was the hypothesis that while the guards slept his disciples stole the body away. Moreover, such a piece of lying hypocrisy would have been so inconsistent with the unde-

* Acts xvi, 27.

niable sincerity of the apostles, so contradictory to the life they lived, and the death they died as disciples of the Master, that the absurdity is too apparent. It cannot be rationally maintained.

The claim that Jesus swooned but did not die is refuted by the inconsistencies that multiply at every step. How did this fact escape the attention of the guards? What could a man in such a condition as he must have been in—even if not dead—do with himself? The loss of blood, the agony, the weakness, would have made it necessary for him to have had the most delicate nursing to restore him, and that for a long time. Did the disciples *steal* the body, resuscitate him, and nurse him to health and strength again, and then, abandoning their old religious faith, did they go out to live a lie while they lived and then die for that lie, while they taught the highest type of morality ever taught on earth? The contradiction is too glaring. The position is untenable.

They are represented as having no idea of nature and the continuity of her laws. This charge is made for the purpose of making it appear easy for them to believe, without evidence, in the interruption of the laws of nature. But that this representation, too, is an exaggeration is quite evident, and false because it is an exaggeration. These fishermen had been knocked about too much not to have known something of the world. Contact with men and conflict with the ugly currents of life had given much severe and rugged discipline. There was prevalent in the time, as appears from the New Testament, such an appreciation of nature as made the miracles to be very wonderful events. When the man blind from his birth had his eyes opened, they say, "Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind." * Why did the disciples refuse to believe the reports of the women, and regard them as idle tales? Why did

* John ix, 32.

Thomas insist on the evidence of his senses, refusing to believe the testimony of those who had seen Jesus, until he should see the nail-prints and feel the spear-wound? Greek philosophy had spread far and wide. The Sadducees, who believed neither in angels nor the resurrection, were the skeptics of the time, and would keep the public mind alert on all the lines of thought that make for the permanence of the natural. Therefore, in spite of their superstition, we are compelled to recognize the fact that these men were well equipped to observe the great outstanding facts of this supernatural revelation; to see their relation to the course of nature, as in the case of the blind man, and to report the facts in the most simple, straightforward, and trustworthy way. That they were competent witnesses it is vain to deny. It is not necessary that a man should be either a linguist, scientist, or philosopher in order to be accepted as a competent witness in

a court of law concerning matters of fact. These witnesses were not called upon to formulate any theory; they were called upon to report the things made known to them through their senses. They were to report what they heard and saw, and for this kind of testimony they were well qualified.

Very much has been made of the discrepancies which appear in the several accounts of the resurrection. It may be freely admitted that there are discrepancies. This would necessarily be the case in a narrative that was transmitted orally. Only a stenographically written account could be free from such discrepancies. These variations show that there was no collusion—the writers did not combine and agree to make up an account of the resurrection. But such an admission by no means supports the conclusion so frequently drawn therefrom. We have seen in a preceding chapter that the tens of thousands of variations in the manuscripts

from which our New Testament comes are of very little consequence. When Guiteau was on trial for his life, one witness testified that the man who shot Garfield wore a soft hat, another testified that he was bareheaded; but this discrepancy, this contradiction, did not disturb the evidence, which showed that Guiteau, hat or no hat, was the man that shot Garfield. In any court of law you may find witnesses contradicting each other, and even the same witness, from different points of view, contradicting himself. The important question is this: Upon what do the witnesses agree? When all the testimony, in spite of discrepancies and contradictions, points to one fact, that fact is regarded as reasonably established. That the gospel witnesses are all agreed upon the resurrection of Jesus there can be no doubt.

The failure and abandonment of the several theories is instructive.

Reimarus taught that the supernatural was put upon the narrative by *fraud;* but

that theory was short-lived. Paulus taught that the apostles thought miracles were wrought, but that they were mistaken. That, too, was soon abandoned, for Strauss demolished it by the claim that if these gospel narratives came to us from eyewitnesses, then the supernatural elements can never be eliminated from them.

Renan, the brilliant French savant who has just gone from us, finds none of the above theories satisfactory. He acknowledges the genuineness and authenticity of a large portion of Paul's epistles, and places the gospel of Matthew as early as 84 A. D., and that of Mark in 74 A. D. But he attempts to break the force of the testimony for the resurrection by crediting the belief to visions. He tells us that "a gigantic dream had for ages pursued the Jewish people, perpetually renewing its youth in its decrepitude;" and this dream he continues through the apostolic age. Mary's conversation with Christ at the tomb becomes in his hand

first a "light-vision," and then a "shadow" which fades away; but she *thought* she heard her name called, she *thought* it was the voice of the Master. Her love accomplishes the rest. The disciples believe when they find the tomb empty. A few doubt, it is true, but another vision removes that doubt. His account of Jesus's appearance is as follows: As they were assembled "during a moment of silence some slight breath passed over the face of the assembly. At these decisive periods of time a current of air, a creaking window, or a chance murmur are sufficient to fix the belief of peoples for ages. At the same time that the breath was perceived they fancied that they heard sounds. Some of them said that they discerned the word 'schalom'—'happiness,' or 'peace.' This was the ordinary salutation of Jesus, and the word by which he signified his presence. No possibility of doubt; Jesus is present; he is in the assembly. That is his cherished voice; each one recognizes

it. This idea was all the more easily entertained because Jesus had said that whenever they were assembled in his name he would be in the midst of them. It was, then, an acknowledged fact that Jesus had appeared before his assembled disciples on the night of Sunday."* He does not tell us that this is all pure fancy. He fancies that there *may have been* a creaking window; that there *may have been* a passing breath; that some one *may have said* he heard a voice, and by all of these *may have beens* he proposes to account for the belief that Jesus had appeared, and to substitute these fancies for the testimony of the witnesses, that he did appear. He represents the account of the later appearances as due to the dreamy state in which the disciples lived. He writes: "It was John and Peter, more than all the others, who had been favored with these intimate conversations with the well-beloved phantom. One day Peter, dream-

*See Renan's *The Apostles*, p. 68.

ing, perhaps (but why do I say this? Was not their life on these shores a perpetual dream?), thought that he heard Jesus ask him, 'Lovest thou me?' The question was thrice repeated. Peter, altogether under the influence of tender and sad feelings, imagined that he replied, 'O! yea, Lord! Thou knowest that I love thee,' and on each occasion the apparition said, 'Feed my sheep.'"* Think of Peter and John as living so dreamy a life that they can project their phantom fancies outward, and make them so objective and real as to hold conversations with them, and then believe that they receive commands from them, and then go and die to carry out these commands.

There is no possibility of condensing the theory of Renan and producing its effect, for it is the effect such as a picture would produce and not an argument. There is a subtle charm in his diction, an insinuating facility in his assumptions, which is intox-

* *The Apostles*, p. 75.

icating, and which makes one feel as though his head were enwrapped in some perfumed, sense-bewildering halo. This weird wizard waves his magic wand and the dissolving views begin to appear; words and theories and visions melt and coalesce as in a dream, and you almost fancy that you yourself see all that this prose poet would have you see.

He fights shy of analysis, and that is not surprising. He says: "After Jesus, it is Mary who has done most for the foundation of Christianity. The shadow created by the delicate sensibility of Magdalene wanders still on the earth. Queen and patroness of idealists, Magdalene knew better than anyone how to assert her dream and impose on every one the vision of her passionate soul. Her great womanly affirmation, 'He has risen,' has been the basis of the faith of humanity. Away, impotent reason! Apply no cold analysis to this *chef d'œuvre* of idealism and of love. If wisdom refuses to console this poor hu-

man race betrayed by fate, let folly attempt the enterprise. Where is the sage who has given to the world as much joy as the possessed Mary of Magdala?" * It is not strange that Renan objected to the application of "cold analysis" to this tissue of fancy. The fact is that the vision was needed too often. What shall we do with the testimony of this witness, who says:

> For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also. †

Is it possible to satisfy this evidence by saying that these witnesses are the dupes of an excited fancy? The discouragement, the dejection, the despair were hostile to hope, and, if we trust the record, there could have been no expec-

* *The Apostles*, p. 61. † 1 Cor. xv, 3–8.

tation of Jesus's return out of which to construct the vision. Renan makes no account of the test given to this "phantom" by the repeated appearances; of the test that was made by speaking with it, by seeing it, by touching it, by hearing it, and by eating with it; he fails to account for the revolution in feeling from utter despondency and blank despair to bounding joy and indomitable courage. It will not meet the case to say, as he does say, that they wrought themselves up to the belief that Jesus did not die, for that is pure fiction, nor to say that any sagacious man could have foretold the result with them.* Such a statement is in defiance of all the evidence. He makes no explanation of the removal of the stubborn doubt of Thomas; he thinks it of no account that Jesus appeared to Paul and to five hundred brethren at once, many of whom were living at the time Paul wrote; he forgets that this faith stood them in good stead in the dun-

* *The Apostles*, p. 57.

geon and at the block, that they went through fire and flood believing and preaching Jesus and the resurrection. Can the facts upon which they build their faith be disposed of by supposing that they mistook apparitions which had no objective reality, heard words which were not spoken, and saw deeds which were not done?

There are so many considerations that lie against Renan's theory that it is difficult to even mention them in the space allowed us here. Our Sunday, which is in commemoration of the resurrection of the Lord, is a witness to the truth of the apostle's testimony. We have a letter from the younger Pliny, written to the emperor Trajan in the year 110 A. D., in which he speaks of them as meeting in the early morning of a *stated day* for worship; they sing a hymn to Christ as to God, and separate. In the latter part of the day they meet to partake of an innocent meal. There can be no reasonable doubt that this was the Lord's day. John was in the Spirit on

the Lord's day, on the island of Patmos, and John had seen Christ. Why does he mark that day as the Lord's day? How did this day become established? how did it supplant the Jewish Sabbath? The day is evidently a memorial of Christ's resurrection, and its general observance by the very early Church shows the faith of the Church from that time. Every ringing church bell voices the faith of Christendom in the resurrection of Jesus.

That these narratives did not get their authoritative standing except under most careful supervision is made evident from the fact that the apostolic fathers—the disciples of the apostles—do not consider their testimony to be final except as they teach what the apostles taught. These fathers make a wide difference between the utterances of apostles and disciples in general. They admitted no book to the New Testament which had not apostolic authority. We see the care with which that place in the apostolic body was filled

which was made vacant by the death of Judas.

> Of the men therefore which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection.*

He must be an eyewitness, one who had gone out and in with them during all the period of Jesus's public ministry.

The same caution appears in Luke's introduction to his gospel:

> Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.†

The man who assumes to bear testimony to these events must be chosen with care, and must have had the best possible opportunity to see and hear, to handle and test the facts. It is evi-

* Acts i, 21, 22. † Luke i, 1–4.

dent that these apostles were conscious of their mission as witnesses: Jesus chose them for this purpose; gave them special manifestations and special explanations for their work. It has been truly said that he spent much time with twelve men. He was training them to be his apostles. The immortal interests of the race are in a most important sense committed for a few years to the keeping of these twelve men.

We can only mention a few of the more marked characteristics of these witnesses. In the first place they were honest. It is hardly possible to-day to charge them with deliberate fraud. They intended to tell the truth; they tell their story in detail; they report the names of the persons that went to the tomb, the time of the day, the surprise, and the unbelief of the disciples; they tell us that Peter and another disciple ran together; that the other disciple outran Peter but went not into the tomb; that Peter went and stooped down and

looked in and saw the linen clothes lie. A narrative thus given in detail has the marks of honesty about it. It is not a device of rhetoric which makes that disciple outrun Peter and then pause; which shows us Peter passing on and bending down to look into the tomb. It has the characteristics, as have the other accounts, of a narrative by an eyewitness.

The gospels seem to put emphasis upon the fact that all these manifestations were to *the senses*. In the first chapter of the Acts Luke tells us that "He showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs." But the language is stronger than this. Professor Thayer, in his New Testament lexicon, renders the Greek (τεκμήρια) as follows: "That from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable evidence, a proof." Liddell and Scott make the word which is in the plural stronger still; it indicates "a proof from sure signs or tokens, a demonstrative proof." There is another significant word

(ὀπτανόμενος) which "conveys the idea of the Lord's having been in the habit of showing himself." It is a "frequentative" verb, and as such expresses continuous or repeated action.* The choice of these words was not accidental. Luke had in mind the thought that he was frequently seen, that he ate with his disciples, talked with, "speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God;" that they touched him and handled him, making these signs "infallible." This argument is cumulative in its force. If we follow the order of these appearances as given us by John we find Mary saying, "I have seen the Lord." At the next appearance "He showed unto them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad when they *saw* the Lord." These witnesses reported to Thomas, saying, "We have *seen* the Lord;" then comes the manifestation made to Thomas, who believed after he had touched

* *The Apology of the Christian Religion*, by Macgregor, p. 385.

the Lord and seen the nail-prints. John gives us an account of one more manifestation, and that was to several disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Peter comes to the front as usual, and after the great draught of fishes Jesus invites them to break their fast, and then holds that memorable conversation with Peter, asking, "Lovest thou me," and charging him, "Feed my sheep." Peter also emphasizes this testimony of the senses saying: "We did not follow cunningly devised fables, . . . but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty." * John writes:

That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal *life*, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be fulfilled.†

If we add to this the language of the apostle Paul we have a body of testimony

* 2 Peter i, 16. † 1 John i, 1–4.

that stands firm as Gibraltar. With unshaken confidence the apostles went to their mission and to death preaching everywhere the gospel of the resurrection.

Remembering, then, the failure of all other theories to account for the facts—the memorial of the resurrection, in the Lord's day; the extreme caution in the appointment of a successor to Judas; the early and universal preaching of the resurrection; the emphasis put upon the testimony of the senses; the independent testimony of Paul; the assumption he makes that this was the faith of the Corinthian Church only a few years after the crucifixion; the vital relation of the event to the whole system of religious thought and expectation with which it stands connected; and, far above all other evidence, the majestic personality of Jesus Christ—we may reasonably believe that God did bring again "from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep," and that he will bring us up also with him.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRIST AND THE APOSTLE PAUL.

WHAT evidence is there in the conversion and life of the apostle Paul for the truth of Christianity? We may study this question, in the first place, by asking, How did Saul the persecutor become Paul the apostle to the Gentiles? We have the answer to that question from Luke, the companion of Paul:

> And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.*

* Acts ix, 3–9.

This is the account given us in the Acts by Luke, the companion of Paul. We have a more extended account in Paul's speech at Jerusalem, spoken to the people from the stairs of the castle. That this account comes from Paul himself no one is disposed to dispute. We know the life of the apostle Paul from documents entirely trustworthy and from his own hand. He gives us a condensed account of a part of his life and of his claim to apostleship by an independent revelation, as follows:

For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went

up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.*

His letters, studied in connection with the Acts, give us a lifelike picture, a kind of miniature photograph, of this student of Gamaliel, this Pharisee of the Pharisees, this religious zealot, this stalwart defender of the faith. He is profoundly convinced that the faith of his fathers is at stake, and that he must hunt this fanaticism out of existence. We can but admire the high loyalty which could hold him steady while the chosen executioners opened the shining way to Stephen's royal soul. His "slaughter-breathing" was a terror to all who knew him, and we do not wonder that Ananias went reluctantly to open his blind eyes and let the light into his blind soul.

We have seen how Renan accounts for the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. He applies the same hypothesis to the conversion of Saul. In the first place he makes

* Gal. i, 12–19.

Saul, while on his way to Damascus, the victim of a remorseful conscience. He develops that theory out of the following suppositions: Saul may have suffered great mental depression; may have had a very tender regard for these Christians; he may have seen the face of Jesus looking reproachfully upon him; he may have been much impressed by the reports of the apparitions of Jesus; he may have fancied that the houses seen through the trees as he drew near Damascus were the houses of his victims.* Let it be noted that the record does not show that Saul had these experiences. They were *possible*, not probable, and that is their full force. But to conceive them as possible, and then think of them as actual, and then to argue that Paul was suffering from remorse is to play with loaded dice. There is a more reasonable account of Saul's state of mind. Paul himself informs us, in his defense before Agrippa, that he verily thought

* *The Apostles*, pp. 171, 172.

he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." He says that when these saints "were put to death I gave my vote against them." We are told that when Jerusalem was razed, and when the conflagration ran on toward the temple and caught its sacred cedar wood and melted its golden tables, every Jew was fired with a rage which made him fight with superhuman strength.

> "Through their torn veins reviving fury ran,
> And life's last anger warmed the dying man."

Paul gives us no evidence that he was the victim of remorse. His idea of the majestic personality of the Messiah, of his sway over the nations, of his eternal reign upon the throne of David, made it impossible for him to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the King of the Jews. If he ever hesitated the most natural supposition is that he fought that hesitation down with the thought that this crucified Nazarene and his grimy fishermen could not possibly fill out the glow-

ing prophetic picture of the Messianic reign. He saw the sacred cedar, the golden altar, and the Holy of Holies all profaned and imperiled by this mob of pretentious fanatics. There is no material out of which to develop remorse except in the fancy of the objector. Saul's lofty soul was aglow with the righteous wrath of a man who fought against the enemies of the national faith, enemies who waged their battle, too, in the very streets of the holy city.

Renan makes at least thirty suppositions concerning matters of fact in order to carry his anti-supernatural hypothesis through. The theory of remorse is built up for the purpose of making a series of later suppositions plausible. He goes on to suppose the occurrence of a thunder storm, a sunstroke or something like it, a state of unconsciousness, a three days' fever accompanied by delirium and hallucinations, and out of the delirium of these three days he works up Paul's faith in the supernatural

revelation made to him, and sends him forth to the world the great apostle to the Gentiles. It is not strange that he expresses himself with some hesitation as to whether this does, after all, account for the facts in question. Nevertheless he prefers to account for Paul's conversion, which he does not deny, by a series of hallucinations, connected with a thunder storm and a sunstroke, rather than to admit that Jesus appeared to Saul, as Paul to the close of his life constantly affirmed. We need to remember that all these principal suppositions were made under the vitiating influence of the theory that the supernatural could not be admitted. The question still remains, Have we accounted for the facts?

There must have been something very peculiar, indeed, about that thunder. It is not often that the muttering lips of the black heavens articulate so distinctly the "Hebrew tongue." Hear its "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Hear its "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou perse-

cutest." Hear its "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And has the thunder foresight as well? Yea, verily! Hear it directing this cowed, conscience-smitten culprit: "Go to Damascus; and there it shall be told thee what thou shalt do." Hear it appointing this Jew to his Gentile lifework: "I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." This is the most eloquent thunder the world has ever heard. A thunder so unique has some of the startling notes of a revelation.

But even such an accidental combination of fiery wrath, on Saul's part, of thunder and lightning on nature's part, and the well-timed and comforting words of Ananias, the devout and trembling evangelist, issuing in such results, would be sorely in need of explanation. Renan comes perilously near making sick fancies and the product of diseased imagination of more value to the truth than solid facts and rational beliefs. If the visions of Mary and the disciples can give the Lord back to the

faith and hope of the world; if the thunder and lightning, combined with fever, delirium, remorse, and temporary dementia, all accurately though accidentally timed to the discreet words of some Ananias, can give us such men as Paul, why not trust to incoherent dreams and airy visions? Away with science, cold analysis, and facts.

The change in the man was very great. His theology was changed. From that hour a revolution began, which gave him a new view of Old Testament prophecy, especially that relating to the Messiah and the Gospel for the race. He had been a bigoted Pharisee, as he himself says, "a Pharisee of the Pharisees." But all this is changed. He becomes preeminently the apostle to the Gentiles. Far in advance of Peter he sees that the Gospel has no limitations; that it is for Jew and Gentile alike, male and female, bond and free.

His whole theory of salvation was changed. Hitherto it had been a theory

of works and of ceremonial observances. But all that is swept away. He declares:

> Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ.*

His affections have been regenerated. His unquenchable love for his kinsmen—he could wish himself anathema from Christ for them—equaled only by his life-long passion for the Gentiles, shows this new creation of the affections in a most vivid way. He accounts for this change by the power of God, made operative in him in that hour when he met Jesus of Nazareth on the way to Damascus.

We have to account not only for this change in Saul's soul—which might have been a momentary experience, and would have been such had there not been something more real than Renan supposes—but also for the life and lifework which followed.

* Phil. iii, 7, 8.

Recall the tests of his faith. He was under the suspicion of the apostles themselves, because of his freedom from ceremonialism and his comprehensive views of the Gospel. He had to make defense of his apostleship to the Church at Galatia; he went through manifold perils both by land and by sea; he was pursued, beaten with rods, and imprisoned; he was on trial for his life and waited through long years for the unrighteous sentence. During all this time he walked in the unclouded light of that midday revelation which dawned upon him on the way to Damascus. His spiritual vision is as clear as the light; his intellectual grip like the unbroken law of gravitation. The intensity of his desires for gospel holiness becomes a veritable conflagration in his soul. The *quality* of his emotions is of the finest. There is naught of the old Maccabean spirit. He is no longer a slaughter-breather rejoicing in the possession of an ecclesiastical halter by which he may drag men and women to

judgment and then flog them with ecclesiastical penalties. He sympathizes with the weak. Like his compassionate Master he is touched with the feeling of their infirmities; he burns with righteous indignation at the remembrance of their wrongs; he gloried in the cross of Christ. It mattered little to him whether he lived or died if the Gospel were only preached and believed. The emotions reveal the man, and Paul's supreme delight was in the cross of Christ and in the prosperity of his converts.

How shall we account for this inner life, this new illumination, this furnace of gospel desire, this high quality of spiritual emotion, this granitic steadiness of purpose? He accounts for it by affirming that he was not alone. He had met Jesus. The shock of that first contact regenerated him, and the unbroken continuity of that contact had sustained him. When he seemed to be alone he was not alone. The matchless personality of Jesus Christ is to Paul

the only possible explanation. He rests back on that spiritual presence for strength in his weakness and light in the darkness. The life he lived was not an isolated life, but the life of Christ in him. Intellect, emotions, and will were open, and always open, to the floods of life which are hid with Christ in God. The high potential of his spiritual life was its connection with this hidden life. This is Paul's account. Can any man give a more reasonable account?

The only purpose of a theory is to account for the facts. Can any theory except Paul's explain the light, the voice, the commission, the blindness, the healing, the conviction, the radical revolution, the splendid lifework, and the glorious death?

Perhaps, after all, that "gigantic dream" of a "world destiny" which haunted Israel and rejuvenated its life, as Renan says, may have been a revelation and not a dream. If so, perhaps we have in Saul, now become Paul, another illustration of

that supernatural power which guided Israel, and which, working through the centuries and subduing all things to its own purposes, manifests itself to the Isaiahs and the Pauls, and makes them heralds of the glory yet to be revealed.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST AND THE SINNER.

WHATEVER the origin of sin may have been does not concern us here, nor what the origin of man. There comes a time in the history of every man when, in the light of the reason that is in him, he perceives the right and the wrong; he feels the impulse of obligation and lays the law of duty upon himself. But, although he sees the right, he does the wrong, and is conscious of his guilt. This mysterious power of sin works in him, a dominating law, and its wicked dominance and guilty entail are made clear to him by the testimony of his own consciousness. That damning testimony, which, like the blood spot on Lady Macbeth's hand, will not out, he has written in fixed and flaming colors along the whole course of his his-

tory. We may read it in strange hieroglyphics cut into enduring monuments; we may find it standing boldly out in the great tragic literatures of Greece and Rome, of India, China, and Judea; we may hear it in the piteous bleating of innocent lambs led dumb to sacrificial slaughter; we may see it in the unkempt and nasty fakir of the Orient, and find it in the saint, prim and pretty, or stately and reverend, who bows at Christian altars. Goethe knows whereof he writes when he says, "There lies around us full many an abyss which fate has dug, but the deepest is here in the heart." Only once has the continuity of that law been utterly broken and its bad reign successfully defied. Jesus the crucified shows no taint of sin; he never confessed sin; he never prayed to be forgiven. Man is a sinner, but seeks to become a saint. Can he be saved from the habit and guilt of sin? Can he be delivered from this deep discord which runs through his life—from this inward strife, the root of all his mis-

ery? That is a question which has engaged the attention of all the ages.

If we can get a clear view of the nature of sin we shall the more easily see what the needs of the sinner are, and Christ's relation to these needs. Sin is not an inheritance from wicked ancestors. We may inherit wealth, but we cannot inherit sin. Sin is always a personal matter, an act of the will; we may inherit ill-balanced powers, turbulent passions, and lawless appetites, but inasmuch as this is the result of bad inheritance, insomuch it is not of the nature of sin; it is below the moral plane. We are no more responsible for such an inheritance than we should be for any inherited physical deformity. Sin, which brings guilt and condemnation, which involves choice and freedom, can never be inherited. No moral being can be held responsible for what he could not avoid; no moral being can sin except in the realm of what may be chosen or not chosen. Whatever we may call

those acts into which the free choice of the subject does not enter—whether we call them true or false, lovely or unlovely, helpful or harmful—we cannot call them sins. Sin is a personal matter; sin *cannot* be inherited.

Sin has many forms, but only one root, namely, selfishness, and that the lower self *versus* the higher; for there is a self which no moral being may sacrifice for any consideration in the universe, a self which if we sacrifice we dethrone God. The seat of his throne is mysteriously involved in that ideal self which we are set to defend and to make actual. Between this natural self and this ideal self there is discord, the discord of which the apostle writes in the seventh chapter of Romans: "But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."* This is "the internal war between the reason

* Rom. vii, 23.

and the passions," of which Pascal writes. "What a chaos, what a contradiction, what a prodigy is man," writes Rousseau. The selfish life fans the fires of internal discord, sets the man at war with men, and makes him a rebel against God. It fixes itself upon us in iron habits; it serves its base ends with all the powers it can command in nature, man, and God, and if we foster this selfishness it will blacken all our days.

But that man can be redeemed and carried up out of his sin to the realization of the ideal life seems probable from the very fact that such an ideal life is forever haunting his dreams by night and illuminating with a holy light his vision by day. Neither is this experience limited to the peoples that have been blessed with the gospel light; all over the heathen world may be found tragic and pitiful evidences of the working of that higher ideal. That Hindoo devotee who sits in silence by the sacred stream, who has not spoken for twenty-four years, or that "sacred being" who has

held his arms above his head for forty years until he cannot bring them down—these men and all whom they represent give startling emphasis to the prophecy which is in man himself, of the ideal life which is his birthright, and which he feels he ought to realize. To this end he must find some power that will carry him out of himself.

When we really get back to the philosophy of our misery and our need we find that our selfishness cuts us off from God; dependent on him as we are for our very being and continuance in being, there can be no truce in this internal, external, and eternal war until we find our life directed to him and centered in him. The ideal self of which we have spoken as the truer self, if we could make it actual, would carry us on to him.

If we turn to the Christ to ask how he meets these deep spiritual necessities we find that the first step is in the way of repentance. That does not mean, in Christ's

teaching, a superficial stir of the emotional life. It means that the moral subjects cease to choose sin; cease to indorse, apologize for, and extenuate, sin; cease to warm vice in the bosom of affection; cease to color and beautify it with the glamour of a corrupt imagination. The man that repents must seek to see sin as it is, a viper in his bosom.

To *do penance* is not to repent; to cease to do sin is to repent. To wear a hair shirt has no more virtue, though recommended by a Christian priest, than walking upon spikes, or swinging suspended upon hooks stuck into the flesh and recommended by heathen priests. Sin is a spiritual thing, an attitude of mind, a bearing of intellect, affections, and will, and there can be no way out of it that does not reach a *new* attitude of mind, a *new* bearing of intellect, affections, and will. As long as the intellect thinks the evil thing, and the affections cherish it, and the man chooses it, so long sin re-

mains. If some mighty archangel were to write upon the heavens, "Forgiven," and were to attach our name to that writing, we should still be in sin, if intellect, affections, and will remained in antagonism to God. Christ's teaching on this point is thoroughgoing. He does not minify the meaning of sin; he knows the paralysis which sin works upon the higher powers; he sees the Nemesis of the old Greek tragedians which follows the Ahabs until not a single member of the spotted family survives; he sets the cumulative outcome which gathers through the ages before your eyes in one dreadful stroke. The lying hypocrite falls dead in your presence, and the feet of the young men that have borne out his body wait at the door to bear away the body of his companion in sin. The highly favored city, exalted to heaven with privileges, goes tottling over into the nethermost hell, and the smoke of its torment rises black and hot up to heaven. The course and outcome of sin get dread-

ful emphasis in his dramatic portraiture; it is the most dreadful thing in the universe. The only way out of it is the way of repentance. It is a spiritual thing, an attitude of intellect, affections, and will; and repentance means the taking on of a new attitude of intellect and will. In the nature of the case there can be no other way.

The next step in Christ's way out of sin is faith in God as revealed in him. But in order to exercise this faith God must be so set before us as to give us grounds for the hope that we shall find our need supplied. If we think of God as "the Unknowable" we shall find ourselves unable to exercise faith in him, or it, as the case may be. We cannot turn to that of which we know and can know nothing, for the turning is a turning of thought to a new thought, of affection to a new affection, and of will to a new attitude of will. No such attitude is possible except as we believe "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that

diligently seek him." It is impossible for mind to worship matter, or for man to worship a thing while he conceives it to be a thing. The veriest heathen lifts his object of worship from thinghood and clothes it in his imagination with personal qualities. We cannot put ourselves into trustful relations with mere power. We may seek to learn its laws, and get out of its mad rush when it sweeps by in the hurricane or in the wild waves of desolating floods, but trust it we cannot. The question with the weary world is not how to get on with "the stream of Tendency, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," as Mr. Arnold puts it, but to find the personal God, who can and will have mercy upon the sinner. The whole history of the thousands of millions of heathenism shows, by its sacred literatures, its temples, its priests, its shrines, its sacred rivers, and endless pilgrimages that the human soul goes groaning on in its misery and groping on in its darkness, "feeling

after God." The ceaseless cry of the human heart is, "O that I knew where I might find him."

Filial faith, which alone can satisfy the soul, demands fatherly love. And this is just the revelation which Christ brings to us. The central theme of his Gospel is "God so loved the world." He came out from the Father's bosom to teach men of their royal blood, to recall to their minds the fact that they were created in the image of God. What the ideal in us demands, that he proclaims to be possible. A word of interpretation is needed as to the inferences to be made from this teaching. Does love mean, when applied to God, what it means when applied to man? That has been disputed, but if love does not mean love it would be helpful if the objector would tell us what it does mean. Does it mean the opposite? What idea shall we connect with our revelation when we read, "God is love"? With what thoughts shall our minds be occupied when we kneel

and say, "Our Father?" The fact is, unless love mean love it can mean nothing, it becomes an utter blank; our revelation is gone, and our God and Father are gone. Moreover, no other conception can meet the demands of our souls. A God indifferent to his creatures we could not trust; a God that hated us we would not dare to trust; the soul cries out from the ideal summits of its being for a God of love. But love means willingness to sacrifice for the beloved; no other meaning is intelligible. A God that is called "Love" and "Father," but would do nothing to save or help his children, may be spelled as above, but must be pronounced "devil."

Love, and sacrifice for the beloved, are in reality equivalent. The latter is love in action. Christ gives us in his doctrine of the Father just that for which the soul longs. God is eager, under the law of love, to put himself at cost for those whom he loves. There may be obstacles in the way of the display of this love; not every fa-

ther can do for every son what he would like to do, as his favors may be turned to curses. That will depend on the son, but whatever our disabilities are, because of sin, they are provided for in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he stands before the race with outstretched hands, bringing from the Father the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved." He offers forgiveness full and free, "Come, without money and without price." The apostle goes so far as to say, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more exceedingly." Christ weaves the Father's invitation into the matchless parables: the woman seeking the lost piece of silver, the shepherd out on the mountains "cold and bare," seeking the lost and straying lamb; the prodigal's father waiting and watching, seeking to descry in the dim distance the form of his wandering son. All these tell of love, and of love at cost for men. Did Christ overdo the truth? Not if God is our Father. He is the me-

diator of a new and better covenant. It stirs all the better nature of the man; it shames him into penitence; it warms him by its love; it nourishes all his higher hopes; it kindles his imagination and transmutes his awakened emotions into motives for holy deeds. One thing is sure, this Gospel meets the necessities of the sinner's desperate case. Could some competent representative of the whole class stand up to speak for them, we know quite well what would be the contents of his speech. He would ask for the knowledge of the love of God, for power to repent and believe, for the confirmation of the hope of immortality. These wants which he voices the Gospel has met. The only question is whether the sinner will make actual what God the Father, by his grace in Jesus Christ, has made possible.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRIST AND THE BELIEVER.

WE have seen that, according to the New Testament, Christianity is a spiritual life and that it affects the whole man—intellect, sensibilities, and will. We are now to inquire more particularly into this life in order to see its evidential value for our faith. The first question is, How do we know the experiences of the believer? The answer is, just as we know the experiences of the sinner. Man cannot keep his self-condemnation to himself. Every man feels that he is a sinner. There is a vague sense, too, while he struggles in the toils of this net, that he *ought not* to be a sinner. Moreover, he feels that in this experience he is related to the higher power or powers that rule in the universe. At the other end of that relation

is He to whom he must be reconciled, and with whom he must make his peace. In the light of the Gospel and in the presence of the compassionate and sinless Saviour this sense is greatly intensified. The burning rays of the full-orbed Sun of righteousness seem to be focused upon the soul; there is not only light and fire in the conscience, but the light shines upon him to whom this obligation relates, and we are ready to say with Job, "Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself." *

We have spoken of this experience as showing itself in the feelings, but there is in it something more than feeling; there is a knowledge of the feeling and of ourselves as the subject of the feeling. Consciousness is the all-seeing eye of the soul by which we know with absolute certitude our thoughts, feelings, and volitions. Nor is this all. If we scrutinize carefully this feeling of obligation we shall find an intellectual activity that carries us directly

* Job xlii, 5, 6.

and constantly on toward God. We did not give these moral ideals to ourselves; we find them in ourselves waiting for recognition. They rise up in us, or rather come down upon us out of an ideal world, and we cannot dispossess ourselves of them. The ideal of righteousness and the impulse of obligation which starts into action with that ideal urge us on with peremptory command as surely as though sounded in trumpet-tones from smoking and blazing Sinai. When the voice of conscience sounds the temple of the soul is always open toward the stars, and the culprit instinctively whispers as he scans the heavens, "It is the voice of the king."

This account of the moral feelings, accompanied by the cognitive act by which we know them and know them as our own, inseparable from that other intellectual act by which we are compelled to affirm our relation to God, ought to have its parallel in our Christian experience. If this experience of the believer be real it will show

itself in intellect, sensibility, and will, and and will necessitate a constant reference to God. It may be conceded that there is often too great emphasis put upon this emotional life; that there is too little intelligent thought and too little moral energy. However, the peril among cultivated people is not that the emotional side of the religious life will be exaggerated, but suppressed, and so distort and stunt the whole spiritual life. Nevertheless, since religion is a matter of such transcendent interest, and since all experience appears in the realm of the feelings, and has no meaning or worth apart from the sensibilities, to the realm of feeling we must go for the most prominent facts connected with a believer's experience.

The first great fact that demands attention is that the believer finds *peace* in believing. Paul's life is in evidence. The eighth chapter of Romans—and it illustrates many other parts of his writings—shows that a great peace had taken posses-

sion of his soul. It was not the peace of moral stupor which comes to the soul when the conscience has become seared and is no longer sensitive to the call of duty. On the contrary, his conscience had been keenly alive, quickened to a distressing sensitiveness to moral obliquity. His peace, which was lifelong, must have been the peace which the soul enjoys when its deepest needs have been met. The essential and ineradicable needs of the religious nature are at least two: man needs to believe that his sins are forgiven, and to be able to call God his Father. To call him "the Unknowable" will not answer. To find him in nature or at Sinai as the great lawgiver, has no promise of peace. The psalmist tells us we may find him in "the uttermost parts of the sea, . . . in heaven," and "in Sheol;" * but it will be God the lawgiver, and not God our *Father*. The heart of man, however, yearns not for a lawgiver, but a lover, a Father; not for one that

* Psalm cxxxix, 8, 9.

can reward the righteous, but for one that will have mercy upon the sinner. These yearnings of Paul's soul were satisfied. He found peace in believing in Jesus Christ. That peace spread over all the powers of his soul, and there was a great calm there. If the eternal internal war did not cease it was waged with assurance of victory. From the hour when Paul met Jesus on the way to Damascus it is perfectly clear that a harmonizing power, which promised an end of faction, began to work in his soul. It is perfectly clear, also, in all his epistles that this peace which promised an end to the feud between the old man and the new man in Christ Jesus was present in all his relations with men, in his thought of destiny, and his thought of God.

But Paul does not tell his whole experience in that somewhat passive word "peace." His experience was often one of overflowing, inexpressible joy. Listen to his song in the dark dungeon of Philippi

while the prison walls shake and the keeper trembles. Read his great prayer for the Ephesian Church where he thinks of God as "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." * Hear him exhorting the Philippians: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." "Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say, Rejoice." † And finally lift yourself to the height he has gained when, having fought the good fight and kept the faith, he is about to receive the "crown of rejoicing" from the hand of him whom he has served even unto death. This, be it remembered, was no fictitious joy put on for an occasion. He reveled in it on the perilous deep and in the dungeon. It was no weak sentiment, but as deep as life eternal. His soul was buoyant with it when he went to his trial and his death. Such was his joy in Christ that it was enough for him if Christ were preached, it mattered not whether by his life or his death.

* Eph. iii, 20. † Phil. iii, 1; iv, 4.

This experience is not exceptional. If we keep in mind those believers in whom the Gospel has had its most perfect work we may find hundreds of thousands along the centuries that have repeated it in all its essentials. Read the biographical record from Polycarp to Livingstone, dead upon his knees in distant Africa; from Augustine to Edwards, a giant in intellect and a rapt mystic in experience; from John, the beloved disciple, to John Wesley, the greatest apostle of the new life in modern times; remember that these are but types of which there have been many representatives, and that this experience has characterized all, whether Calvinist or Arminian, Catholic or Protestant, and we have a most marvelous body of phenomena to be accounted for.

We need not go so far away from home for the facts we have described. There are many limitations in the experience of the most of us. Our joy is mixed and our thought is confused. The Gospel does not

get full possession of us as it ought; nevertheless, every believer has known, with more or less clearness, something of the experience which the Pauls and the Wesleys delineate. He has had the consciousness of sin. Perhaps he has not been brought to the verge of despair and forced to cry out for deliverance as from the loathsome bondage of a dead body, but he has perceived with grief and self-accusation the contrast of what he has been and done with what he ought to have been and to have done; and that is the process of conviction of sin. In the light of the Gospel and in the presence of Jesus he has seen the meanness of his ideals, the sordid selfishness of his motives, and has yearned for the life that is offered by the Saviour.

Every believer knows something of the peace of which Paul speaks. In his best hours—when he most perfectly meets the gospel conditions—he can almost hear the voice of Jesus saying, "My peace I give unto you." The soul is awed and quieted

and comforted, much as it is in the deep stillness and solemn solitude of the forest alone with nature's God. He feels as one might feel on charming Galilee, afloat with noiseless oar, while the stars look down upon him and whisper, "Peace, not as the world giveth." In this hour of surrender to God through Jesus Christ, when conditions are at their best, when the distracting noise of the world and its empty babble are hushed, one feels again the return of childhood's days. The touch of a vanished hand is upon the brow; the alien is at home in his Father's house. The world is beautiful and the sky is clear because the Master has said, "My peace I give unto you." Neither is this the only mood we have known. If the Gospel has had half a chance with us, we, too, have known the charming secret of divine love; and though our lips have been dumb, the harp of a thousand strings has been vibrant to heavenly music, as though swept by angelic fingers.

We get the real content of Christian experience in the hymns of the Church. They set forth what the best representatives of the Gospel have known in their own lives, and what millions all along through the centuries have known, in intermittent experiences, perhaps, and yet have known with such satisfaction and such certainty that they too sing of the highest and richest experiences with perfect assurance. They know that these hymns set forth what the Gospel may do and actually does for men. We need to listen, then, to the angels' song of "peace and good will" in the great congregation, when really stirred by the gospel hope; we need to see the face of the old man rejoicing in the fact that he has lived in communion with Christ for sixty years, while the tears of joy roll down his cheeks and the deep emotion trembles in the tender pathos of his voice; we need to hear it from the favored rich, the abject poor, from the sleek Japanese, the stolid Chinaman, from the dark sons

of Ham, and the world-conquering Anglo-Saxon, from the youthful Samuels and the aged Simeons, from all classes, conditions, and ages, living or dying, and then we need to join in the chorus ourselves in order to know the full meaning of this "peace on earth," which the angels sang on Bethlehem's plain. How shall we account for these centuries of Christian song in which the millions have sought to express their faith, their peace and joy, and their eternal hope?

It is a noteworthy fact that every revival of this spiritual life is accompanied by a revival of song. The deeper experiences of the soul cannot be told in plain prose. John Wesley was the organizer of the great Methodist revival; Richard Watson gave to its doctrines systematic statement; John Fletcher elaborated for them a splendid apologetic, and Adam Clarke became their commentator; but Charles Wesley did more, perhaps, by the hymns he wrote than either of the four to preserve and propa-

gate the new life. He clothed its naked and shivering form with the warm garments of poetry, and the great congregation have sung the new life into the hearts of the people. It is true "the half was never told," but also true that we must forever be seeking to tell it, and the poet is the man to whom the divine gift has come that he may utter for us all, what our poor stammering tongues forever seek in vain to tell. He frames the flowing numbers which fit the glowing theme, and while we give it utterance the eye moistens, the face shines, the heart laughs, and the whole soul is aflame with a joy that is not of earth.

We must now offer a final word in answer to the question how this life is sustained. Our emotions find their root and nourishment either in thought or in action which involves thought, and, in the case of the moral and religious emotions, in both. This joy and peace can only be sustained as they are rooted in a creed that is fitted to produce them and in action appropriate

to them. What is Paul's thought at this point? We may find it in the eighth chapter of Romans. He declares that to them that are in Christ Jesus there is now no condemnation, that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed them from the law of sin and death; that the power which wrought in the Lord Jesus to bring him again from the dead works in them also; that they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. They cherish the thought that their weak prayers are made potent at the throne of grace and mercy by the Spirit's intercessions, with groanings that cannot be uttered; they remember that all things work together for good to them that love God; that God is for them, and is more than all that can be against them. The above creed warrants his song of triumph: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us

from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

This is the creed which supports the life of every believer. When a man believes in Christ a new habit comes over his thought. He thinks of God as no longer offended, but as well pleased with him; as having taken away the sting of his guilt. The fact of sin which hung like a black cloud between him and God, disturbing all the relations which should obtain between a father and his child, making it impossible to think seriously and intelligently about God without thinking of him as offended, has been removed. He is able to put as never before, and does put into his thought of God, all that tender and delightful sentiment with which the child clothes his thought concerning his father. God is *for* him and more than all that can be against him.

The explanation of this new life is not merely a new system of thought. It is

* Rom. viii, 38, 39.

deeper than thought; it is the life of God in the soul. Paul is forever talking of the power that worketh in us. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to work."* He prays for the Ephesians that they may know "the riches of the glory of his [Christ's] inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead."† According to Paul the Gospel is the power of God; faith is to stand by the power of God, and this power of God is Christ in us the hope of glory. He felt that in accepting Christ a new divine energy had taken possession of his being. And every Christian knows that when Christ has really been accepted there is set moving in him an energy that works against everything that is mean and selfish and base, and makes for everything that is pure in thought and speech, help-

* Phil. ii, 13. †Eph. i, 18, 19.

ful and holy in action, noble and ideal in purpose. He knows that a new creation is stirring in all his powers. The intellect, the will, the emotions, the words, and the deeds begin to show forth the new, the ideal life.

Why should this not be so? If the modern philosophy of the world be correct, and God really upholds all things by the word of his power; if we really live and move and have our being in him; if his voice be heard in the conscience; if the facts we have seen in Israel's life and the grace and power we know to have characterized the life of Jesus do not all point to the explanation which Paul gives of this life, to what do they point?

In conclusion, we would emphasize the meaning of the religious ideals of the race. Man feels that by some means he must be brought to peace with God and into communion with him. Nineteen centuries of Christian song and millions of singers testify that that ideal is realized in and

through Jesus Christ. Neither can this ideal be allowed to perish. There are many adverse facts which threaten this ideal, but it is mightier than all that has been against it. It, too, is a fact, and a fact which cannot be left out of consideration. Why has man insisted that this relation shall be realized? There are plenty of experiences for which he has no explanation. He cannot understand the meaning of his poverty. It is true that riches are always a peril to the soul, but why not give him "neither poverty nor riches," for, indeed, poverty is also a snare and a peril? He does not know. He cannot explain why he should be tormented with pain, why opportunities should be denied him that are lavished upon and squandered by others; why he should carry an open grave in his soul which the green of no springtime can make beautiful. There are hints of meaning in all these desolations, but ultimately they have no explanation. They do not seem to fit his need nor to bespeak

the care of his Father. In his Christian experience, however, his ideals have been satisfied. He would not exchange it or modify it except to enrich it and give it wider sway. The man who would substitute anything in the universe, conceivable or inconceivable, for the love he bears his wife and children and the love he receives from them, does not know what love is; and the man who would substitute anything in the universe for love to God and love from God does not know what the Christian experience is. There are some relations which cannot be improved. He believes his sins have been forgiven. The black cloud of guilt has been lifted. He can sing the song of redemption. The Father's voice is in his soul, and is an earnest of explanations yet to come. And the evidential value of these ideals satisfied, the fact that he knows himself to have found in promise and potency what he would perpetuate forever, and what he would that all men might share, is far more

significant than any imaginable adverse facts. How shall we account for this river of joy which runs from Bethlehem through the centuries and swells in resistless volume by our very doors, except as Paul accounts for it by his "Christ in you the hope of glory?" *

* Col. i, 27.

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST AND HISTORY.

THE argument for Christianity in this chapter is that to which Christ appealed when John sent messengers from his prison cell to ask him, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" Christ's answer was: "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them."* It is an appeal to the achievements of Christianity as recorded in history. It is not necessary to play the prophet, for Christianity has been at work in nineteen centuries of history; the record is before us, and we may read it for our-

* Matt. xi, 5.

selves. We are obliged to limit our study to one phase of the subject, namely, to Christ's estimate of the individual.

What was Christ's theory of man? There is no formulated theory in the New Testament, but a definite theory is very clearly implied in all Christ's teachings. He taught that man was made in the image of God, and that all men were brethren, children of a common father. He put no limitation upon the application of this theory to the last man and woman of the race; on the contrary, he fostered it and propagated it both by precept and example. There are some far-reaching philosophical implications in this doctrine. To be created in the image of God is to have reason, conscience, and will, and to be under obligations to use them, and to use them according to the divine plan. It is impossible to suppose, therefore, that one moral being can own another. He cannot own his moral powers, for in the very nature of the case they are subject only to God.

A man cannot submit even to the State or the Church if they command what he thinks God forbids. Neither can a man's bodily powers be owned by another, for it is only through the use of these powers according to *his reason and conscience* that the moral life can be developed. It is altogether conceivable that an inferior race might be so treated in slavery as to be helped on to moral maturity. But the Gospel would require every individual as he comes on into the realm of responsibility to take charge of his own life, to regulate all of his relations to his master by his own reason; and that would render so-called ownership entirely meaningless. Such a system of slavery would require every master to help every individual on toward such maturity by every means possible. He deals with a brother upon whom God has laid a command. No man, no institution, may be allowed to obstruct the way over which the hasting messenger of the king travels on the king's business.

This is the unformulated philosophy which lies at the foundation of all Christ's teaching and is illustrated in all his life.

If then this philosophy be correct, and if the power of God be really in this Gospel, slavery must go down before it. How has it worked? What was the promise of its success? What could be more unpromising for the conquest of the world than the little squad of men and women to whom Christ gave the great command, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost?"* What folly in the instruction given to the twelve chiefs, to whom the leadership for this conquest was committed. "Go," but "Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food."† It was a motley group of leaders and an unpromising following for such an

* Matt. xxviii, 19. † Matt. x, 9, 10.

appalling task. "Four apostles were fishermen, one a petty tax collector, two husbandmen, one is said to have been a coachman, and one a market gardener." * This description fits the case, whether strictly accurate or not. They were illiterate and unimportant men.

It is not strange that Celsus in sheer mockery writes: "If a man be educated let him keep clear of us Christians; we want no men of wisdom, no men of sense. We count all such as evil. No; but if there be one who is inexperienced or stupid, or untaught, or a fool, let him come with good heart." Says Cæcilius: "The greater part of you are worn with want, cold, toil, and famine; men collected from the lowest dregs of the people; ignorant, credulous women;" and he continues, "unpolished, boors, illiterate, ignorant even of the sordid arts of life; they do not understand even civil matters; how can they understand divine?" According to

* Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, p. 455.

various fathers their religion "had the reputation of being an anile superstition, the discovery of old women, a joke, a madness, an infatuation, an absurdity, a fanaticism." * This is no doubt an exaggeration, but it shows the prevalent idea as to the class whence the twelve came, the class to which they went, and with which they succeeded.

And if anything more were needed to make the movement as seen upon the surface either a ludicrous farce—were it not too solemn—or an astounding fraud, it was provided in the fact that the leader and master had been crucified as a common culprit. And yet one is almost startled as he reads the pretentious claim set up in good bold letters above his cross, in Hebrew and Greek and Latin, as though written for the eye of all men, "*This is Jesus the King of the Jews.*" †

We only need to add to what has been

* See Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, p. 455.

† Matt. xxvii, 37.

said above that when Christ began to teach, slavery prevailed everywhere. In Attica the slave population was three times as large as the free, and in Italy the proportion was about the same; the number at one time, according to Blair, rising to 20,832,000, while the free population numbered only 6,944,000. The horrible gladiatorial exhibitions and the cruel deaths to which the slaves were sometimes exposed, at the caprice of cruel masters, and for the most trivial faults, show how wretched was the condition of many of them.

It is not to be denied that more humane sentiments are often found, nor that the Stoic philosophy fostered these sentiments, but it was powerless as a remedy.* The Stoics themselves lacked confidence in it as a regenerating power. Bossier says: "No ancient writer expresses either as a distant hope or as a fugitive desire, or even as an improbable hypothesis, the thought

* See Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 195.

that slavery might one day be abolished." * The philosophy of the time lacked moral momentum. There was no divine command and no conscience. These more humane sentiments needed to be reinforced by the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

As soon as Christianity gets well into the field we begin to note its effects upon this evil. Paul sends Onesimus, a runaway slave, back to his master, but with the instruction that he should be "more than a servant, a brother beloved." Paul adds further, "If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself." † "As early as the year 119 A. D. we hear that Hermes, a prefect of Rome, being converted, presented twelve hundred and fifty slaves for baptism, all having been freed." ‡ From this time on we find modifications going on in the law, making it more and

* See Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*, p. 485.

† Philem. 17.

‡ *Gesta Christi*, p. 227.

more easy to free a slave. The *Day of the Lord* became known as a day especially appropriate for the emancipation of slaves. A decided change in sentiment begins to be apparent in the early part of the second century. In 314 A. D. liberty was declared to be a right which could not be taken away; in 316 A. D. Constantine writes to an archbishop as follows: "It has pleased me for a long time to establish that in the Christian Church masters can give liberty to their slaves." It is clearly evident that a new life has taken possession of the world. The great jurist Henry Sumner Maine writes in his *Ancient Laws* of the changes at work as follows: "We have in the annals of Roman law a nearly complete history of the crumbling away of an archaic system and of the formation of new institutions from the recombined materials. . . . When we leave this jurisprudence at the epoch of its final reconstruction by Justinian (in the sixth century) few traces of archaism can be discovered

in any part of it except in the single article of the extensive powers still reserved to the living parent. Everywhere else principles of convenience or of symmetry or simplification—new principles at any rate—have usurped the authority of the jejune considerations which satisfied the conscience of ancient times. Everywhere a new morality has displaced the canons of conduct and the reasons of acquiescence which were in unison with the ancient usages, because in fact they were born of them." *

This gospel which teaches the supreme value of man steadily gathers momentum with the progress of the centuries. Could we trace the subtle influences of thought which have outlawed slavery, and see the invisible whip of small cords with which it is being driven from the face of the earth, we should see that its every lash is fibered with the gospel of the good Samaritan. The conscience which gives nerve to the

* Maine's *Ancient Laws*, pp. 162, 163.

arm that wields it has its hot indignation from the altar where burns the twin gospel truths, *the fatherhood of God* and *the brotherhood of man.*

In concluding this point we need to remember that with this influence which has freed the slave and lifted him to the level of manhood have gone forward many other beneficent movements. The dreadful corruption which threatened the life of Rome has been mitigated; woman has been lifted from the degradation of ante-Christian times, and the cruel gladiatorial sports have been left far behind. The world is a far better world to-day because of the new gospel of man. If it be asked why the result has come so slowly the answer is because every advance has to be wrought out through men. Great moral ideals must be realized in the lives of great moral heroes and then spread abroad in the life of the people. Moral ideals cannot be put either upon the individual or the race. They are nothing to either,

except as they work them out in life, grow them into, and conserve them by, great institutions. If men are deaf to the divine call, slow to perceive and slower to respond, the progress of the Gospel will be correspondingly slow. If, however, they lend a listening ear, if they are quick to see and courageous to respond, so much the more rapidly will the cause advance toward the goal. It is to be remembered that God works through us.

In the period of the Reformation we have another illustration of the emphasis which the Gospel puts upon the individual. We have seen it working for the emancipation of the body, but always in the interest of the soul. In the Reformation it is seen at work for the emancipation of the mind. The freedom which springs so naturally from the Gospel had been sacrificed to ecclesiastical authority. The rights of reason in matters of doctrine had been denied to the individual on philosophic grounds. The claim had been set

up that the truths of revelation are not accessible to human reason; indeed, they may be contradictory to reason. The believer is to accept them on the authority of the Church. God has communicated them to the Church and authorized her to teach them.* If this be true, the individual is at the mercy of the Church, whatever she may teach. It is her business to teach, his to obey and ask no questions.

Neither was this merely a theory. It was put into practice in the conflict between the Church and the State. For many years this conflict had gone on until at length Gregory the Great—elected to the papacy 1073 A. D.—determined to take the bold step which should make him secure in his authority over the Church and the State. The question which was at issue was, Who should present the symbol of office to a bishop when appointed to

* See Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, vol. i, pp. 452, 460.

his episcopate? The princes had done this, but it was evidently a usurpation of prerogatives which did not belong to them. He forbade this and came immediately into conflict with Henry IV, Emperor of Germany. Never up to this time had any pope expressly asserted that an emperor was amenable to an ecclesiastical tribunal for such ecclesiastical offenses as those of which Henry had been guilty. Gregory not only summoned him to Rome, but excommunicated him from the Church and absolved his subjects from their fealty. Many of them feared to support him. That anathema of the pope, the vicar of Christ on earth, clung to him like a dread disease, a veritable leprosy, tainting the atmosphere about him and threatening all who befriended him. He thought to better his condition by seeking the forgiveness of the pope. Gregory had retired to an old castle at Canossa which was surrounded by a triple wall. Henry made his way with few attendants in an inclem-

ent winter, over unfrequented roads—the ordinary passes were guarded by his enemies—to Canossa. "In penitential garments, with his feet and head bare and unsheltered from the season, the emperor presented himself at the gate of the fortress as a sinner and a suppliant. His humble request was to be admitted to the presence of the pontiff and to receive his absolution. For three dreary days from dawn till sunset the proudest sovereign in Europe was condemned to continue his fast and his penance before the walls and probably under the eyes of Gregory in solitary and helpless humiliation." * He did not even then get the restoration of his title of royalty. This bit of history shows that it was no mock authority which the pope proposed to exercise over the State. It was a denial of all real freedom to the State.

Neither was religious freedom allowed to the individual. In the twelfth century

* See Waddington's *Church History*, p. 239.

Peter Waldo assumed the right to study the Bible and proclaim its truths. He was forbidden to preach, and the interdict was enforced by persecution. It was one of these massacres which inspired Milton's prayer:

"Avenge, O Lord! thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones;
Forget not: in thy book record their groans."

Huss went up to Constance to be burned for his faith. Wycliffe dared to promulgate the principles of the Reformation in England; he died a peaceful death, but the Council of Constance ordered his body and bones to be taken up and "thrown far away from the burial of any church." Savonarola was likewise burned and his ashes cast into the Arno. The fires of persecution which kindled about the bodies of these martyrs set forth the animus of the Church toward all who dared to dissent from the teaching of the

Church. The principle was, believe and live, dissent and burn.

An age sometimes gets itself incarnated in a single individual; his tongue is touched by its fire, and his deeds make luminous its spirit. It took three men, giants of wrath and crime, to express the chaotic barbaric spirit of the French Revolution—Marat, Robespierre, and Danton; but Martin Luther is a whole reformation in and of himself. The whole age is made luminous by the light that shines in his face. Behold him as he stands in the presence of the most notable assemblage of his time at the Diet of Worms. There sat the emperor, six princes, twenty-eight dukes, thirty prelates, surrounded by other dignitaries of the Church and State, numbering two hundred in all. Thousands of people thronged the halls and streets. There were Luther's books upon the table; there sat the two papal legates, Marino Caraccioli and Jerome Alexander; there was John Van Eck, Chancellor of the Arch-

bishop of Treves, waiting to ask whether Luther acknowledged these books and would recant their teaching. One trembles as he sees the lone monk enter that hall to stand apparently alone for Protestantism. But we need not tremble. Luther knew the truth of his cause; he had gone back to the Bible, and he made his stand behind it. He said: "Bring testimony against me, prove by prophetic and apostolic Scripture that I have erred. Unless I am convicted I will recant nothing. Here I stand. I can do no otherwise. God help me. Amen!"*

It is a question of freedom again, this time not of the body but of the mind. There are many mighty forces at work to lift the individual and confirm the rights of the man. The cultivation of Greek philosophy; the revelations of the telescope which destroyed Church authority in matters of science; the discovery of the New World and the demand for men of

* Hagenbach's *History of the Reformation*, vol. i, p. 137.

strength; the multiplication of ambitious and powerful princes who would not tolerate dictation; the restless and resistless energy of the new blood infused into the veins of the age from the conversion and influx of the barbarians—all these forces are to be recognized as primal forces which wrought for the independence of the individual, and, like Titans of old, bore aloft upon their brawny shoulders the stalwart civilization. But the center of the movement was the right of a man to find a reason for his own faith; and the man that stood for all the forces at the center was Martin Luther, who refreshed his giant strength at the original fountain, the word of God. Into the weltering chaos of spiritual forces came this man. In him the struggling cause of the Reformation found a voice. It is said that a voice is sufficient at times upon an Alpine height to send the poised avalanche on its dread mission down the mountain-side into the valley. It only needed a voice potent with

divine authority to set free all the forces of the new age. It was given to Luther to utter that voice, and it was heard in every village and household of the land. It spoke into being a new civilization. Nations began to organize around a new center. William, Prince of Orange, fought out the issue with the Duke of Alva in the Dutch Republic, and won victory for the Reformation there. The cause spread in France and Italy, Bohemia, Switzerland, Scotland, and England. The great universities arose to carry forward the general intellectual advance. No one can say to what extent the outcome was favored by other agencies, but it is perfectly clear that the movement was preeminently a religious movement, and that the freedom of faith was the inspiring recreative principle which wrought in every direction, in literature and schools, in peace and war, in the Church and the State, toward the sublime end achieved in modern European civilization.

We are not to suppose that the whole content of the gospel idea of man was worked out in Luther's time. The Gospel proposes the spiritual transformation of the individual and his deliverance from the bondage of sin. We are still engaged in that task. We have seen its more prominent features in the chapters on "Christ and the Sinner," and "Christ and the Believer." But it is worthy of notice that in the life and work of John Wesley the individual again comes to the front and exhibits anew the power of the Christ in history.

The story of his life is a familiar one. He was always full of zeal for God and prolific of missionary enterprises; but his zeal needed to be tempered and his spirit enriched by the baptism and deliverance that came to him one evening in May, 1738, in a little Moravian prayer meeting. Of that hour he writes: "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins,

even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." And from that experience dates the work of the greatest revivalist the world has known and the greatest revival the Church has seen. To estimate this new development of the Reformation principle, one would need not only to number the followers of Wesley in all lands, but also to estimate the new impetus given to spiritual life in all Christendom; to trace the subtle influences of this life in literature and education; to look with prophetic insight into all modern missionary movements, with the growing purpose that every man and woman of the race shall have the Gospel. The cumulative results of Christ's idea of man we cannot measure. We know, however, that it rolls its current of hope and love in vaster volume, that it gathers more resistless momentum with each succeeding century, and promises to fill the whole earth with its fructifying rivers of gospel grace.

In his *Ancient Law*, Maine says: "Start-

ing as from one terminus of history, from a condition of society in which all the relations of persons are summed up in the relations of family, we seem to have steadily moved toward a phase of social order in which all these relations arise from the free agreement of individuals." And again he says: "The individual is steadily substituted for the family, as the unit of which civil laws take account." * This great jurist comes to this conclusion from a study of the modifications made in the forms of law. Another writer † comes to the same conclusion from a study of social evolution. Fiske affirms that the outcome of human progress will be the prevalence of the Spirit of Christ "throughout the length and breadth of the earth." ‡ And Benjamin Kidd shows that the central feature in this progress is religious faith.

These studies lead us back to the head-

* Maine's *Ancient Law*, p. 163.
† Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*, p. 53.
‡ Fiske's *The Idea of God*, p. 163.

ing of this chapter, "Christ in History." He outdoes all theorists in his estimate of the individual, and by it he is conquering the world. We may now recall the words of Celsus again. He points the finger of scorn at the early disciples and says: "Unpolished boors, illiterate, ignorant men." And we may read in connection with them the words of the great commission, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations." We need not play the prophet; we have only to read history. How shall we estimate the "therefore" of that commission in the light of the centuries of gospel achievement?

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST AND HUMANITY.

IN the nature of the case there can be but one true religion. There can be but one true science of geology, astronomy, ethics, or logic. The true system of astronomy is the one that explains the facts. There may be several theories, and each may have some elements of truth, but when that astronomer appears who is to construct the ultimate science he will take up into his theory all the elements of truth in all other theories, and from his own point of view will construct the true and final system of astronomy. The same must be true of geology, of ethics, of logic, and of all other sciences. This illustrates what may be expected in the field of religion. There can be but one true religion, and that one must cover all the essential

relations between man and God. If those relations could be truly discerned we should have a final anthropology and a final theology.

Christianity claims to be that ultimate religion. The prophets anticipated the universal reign of the Messiah. They foresaw that of which the psalmist sang, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;" * or again, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." †

The New Testament makes the same assumption. The Gospel summons all men to repentance; it is to be preached to all; all are to be raised from the dead and all are to be judged. The great commission contemplates the discipling of all nations, and the baptism of the Spirit was to qualify the witnesses to bear testimony unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

* Psalm ii, 8. † Psalm lxxii, 11.

Christ himself says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself;"* and if we look through the anointed eyes of the New Testament prophet we shall see Christ enthroned at last, and all the millions of the nations under the sway of his scepter.

What is there to justify this hope? We offer a *résumé* of the evidence and leave the elaboration of the points to the reader. Christ offers a system of doctrine that is strikingly simple and rational. His doctrine of sin is true to the facts in the case. It is verified in the consciousness of every man. His doctrine of responsibility is entirely rational. There can be no moral life apart from freedom. Freedom and moral responsibility involve each other and stand or fall together. Consciousness again becomes a witness to our freedom by its testimony to our responsibility, our merit or demerit. The doctrine of forgiveness is demanded by the race.

* John xii, 32.

The millions of the vast heathenisms to-day are conscious of their need, and are seeking in manifold ways to put away their sins. The doctrine of regeneration is demanded by the perverted and depraved nature in which sin thrives so abundantly. The very fountain of life seems to have been tainted. No dusty pilgrimages, no tortures of the body, no blood of bulls or of goats, no genuflections or incantations of white-robed priest can remove the taint. It is dark enough to blacken all the seas. Only the touch creative can remove the taint and cleanse the spiritual life-current. The doctrine of the atonement has also a rational root. No sinner feels easy in presence of his sins and his God. He is forever hiding the one or hiding from the other. The atonement teaches that in some way Christ has removed this difficulty and brought us near to God in peace. We need not form a theory, either moral, governmental, or expiatory. But we may come "just as

we are " and be reconciled to God. The doctrine of the Spirit is rational. The revelation began externally, but man's need is internal. His moral judgments are obscure and perverted; his desires are earthly and sensual, and his will is obdurate. Wherever the divine communication may begin, whether in promises to Abraham, deliverances from Egypt, in bellowing thunder above Mount Sinai, or miracles of healing by the Christ, it will be a failure unless its culmination is a manifestation of the Spirit in this inner life. Here the evil is intrenched, and here the Spirit must come to abide. Such a culmination is eminently rational. The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the hope of immortality are doctrines supported by our ideals since these ideals cannot be realized without them, and they complete a scheme of thought consistent with the unique character of him who revealed these truths to the fishermen along the shores of the blue and beautiful Galilee.

The conquest Christianity has made of the barbaric races of Europe shows what it can do. Its hold upon the Anglo-Saxon race is significant, for the Anglo-Saxon is becoming the conqueror of the world. Numbering only six millions in 1700 and one hundred millions in 1880, and having taken possession of a third of the earth during this period, it will not be likely to lose its disposition to rule when it marshals its hundreds of millions on the rich plains and in the fertile valleys and thrifty marts of trade of all the Oriental world. It is the bearer of the best blood, of the highest courage, and of the most aggressive spirit of the age, and is also the chief representative of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Its agencies already in the field are adequate to bear the good news to the uttermost parts of the earth, and that, too, in a single generation. Number the missionary societies and study the success of the last ten years. Count the schools and the

* See Strong's *Our Country*, pp. 162–165.

literature devoted to the one work. Estimate the meaning of the rise and organization of all the young people's associations for Christian work — the Young Men's Christian Association, numbering more than a quarter of a million; the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, numbering a million; the Epworth League, numbering more than half a million, and add to these a score of smaller organizations all in training for Christian propagandism, and it seems as though the army was already in the field which would carry the cross to the ends of the earth.

The awakening of the Church to the task of saving our cities shows that the dew of eternal youth is yet upon the Gospel. We have come clearly to recognize the fact that the Gospel must regenerate the conditions under which men live. The city missionary enterprises, the industrial schools, boys' clubs, and college and university settlements all show that, whereas the downtown communities have been

partially abandoned by the Churches, and the people left to the cumulative evils of immigration, saloons, poverty, ignorance, and infamy, the Church is sending back again from her own heart her best life blood. The redemptive agencies are multiplying in these dark places, and that, too, under the inspiring influences of the Gospel. The Gospel must purify these fountains of iniquity—streets, alleys, tenements, sewers—the whole environment must be changed for the sake of the souls of men. The clear consciousness of the problem and the returning currents of life are full of promise. The Church, too, must carry the Gospel into all the problems of the times, until strife and passion shall cease. There is no principle that can settle the conflict of classes except the principle of human brotherhood and the recognition of the obligations that go with it. Christianity is to be put to the test in these conflicts as never before. We are to solve them here for the world. They will reappear in

all the long centuries among the vast populations of the East after the uplifting power of the Gospel has been felt and the start for manhood has been really made. But how significant will be the fact for them if Christianity has grappled with these problems and found their solution here in this Western world!

But the larger problem is yet before us: What of the relation of Christianity to the millions of heathenism? When we remember that the great Messianic tragedy occurred on Mount Calvary; that one of Africa's sons, Simon the Cyrenian, was an actor in that tragedy, and that Matthew actually preached the Gospel in Africa, we might have expected that the light would have penetrated the midnight of the Dark Continent, and that the jubilant bells of the gospel day would long since have struck the high noon of Christian civilization in Africa. When we remember that Bartholomew preached in India and Philip in upper Asia we might have prophesied the

early dawn of the day of deliverance for all the Orient. But the seed did not take root and propagate itself. In spite of the fact that there is no power in this world so ambitious of universal empire as the Gospel, and in spite of the fact that the gospel Teacher lived and the great tragedy was enacted almost within hearing of these millions, still at the dawn of the nineteenth century the untaught multitudes might have been seen marching steadily on to the future, no ray of gospel light having fallen upon them ; the naked millions reveling in their savage rites and the roll-call of Protestantism showing scarcely a Gideon's band among them. While we read we know that the sweltering multitudes of China, loaded with the cumulative conservatism of forty centuries, are still bound to a dead past ; that the millions of India, because of idolatry and caste, have been more inaccessible than as though separated by intervening mountain ranges or vast oceans ; that the millions

of Japan now stand only in the dawn of the light that is to lighten the Gentiles, not yet having shaken off the slumber of the night, not quite clear whether they dream or wake ; that the swarthy millions of Africa and the islands of the sea are still deep down in the inaccessible valleys of superstition and native barbarism, where the Sun of righteousness has never yet sent one struggling ray.

In the light of these facts we may well ask whether Christianity is to be equal to this appalling task? If it be not of God, no. If it be, " He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." *

It may be assumed that any religion that is to finally meet the wants of the race and so become universal must meet and satisfy the religious ideals which are imbedded in human nature and are essentially constitutive of that nature. Just as

* Isa. xlii, 4.

in the realm of nature the reason insists that its ideals of law and order—in other words, of rationality—*shall be found;* just as it never hesitates, but modifies and reconstructs its failing hypotheses to explain the facts, assured that they must be found to be rational, so in the realm of morals and religion is there a set of principles or ideals which we cannot suffer to be invalidated. The demand of the reason for their realization is a *fact* that must be put into the scales, and a fact that outweighs all adverse facts.

It may be affirmed with confidence that the ethnic religions are failing to meet these demands of human nature. Seen in the light of historic perspective their failure is evident. We find man everywhere seeking to relate himself to the higher powers, and he may thus be said to have always believed in God. When you catch sight of the first man in the dawn of history you find him to be a religious being. Paul finds the Athenians with an altar to

The Unknown God. A French traveler tells us of his conversation with a Kaffir concerning the Christian religion: "Your tidings," said this uncultivated barbarian, "are what I want, and I was seeking before I knew you, as you shall hear and judge for yourself. Twelve years ago I went to feed my flocks; the weather was hazy. I sat upon a rock and asked myself sorrowful questions; yes, sorrowful, because I was unable to answer them. Who has touched the stars with his hands; on what pillars do they rest? I asked myself. The waters never weary, they know no other law than to flow without ceasing from morning till night, and from night till morning; but where do they stop and who makes them flow thus? The clouds also come and go and burst in water over the earth. Whence come they; who sends them? . . . Do I know how the corn sprouts? Yesterday there was not a blade in my field, to-day I returned to the field and found some; who can have

given to the earth the wisdom and the power to produce it? Then I buried my head in both my hands." * This is human nature apart from special revelation at its devotions. The race has always believed in God, but it has never been satisfied with its belief.

The Pantheon, the temple of all the gods at Rome, was stripped of its ornaments centuries ago. The gods once honored there had long before been despoiled of their glory and abandoned. The Parthenon, resplendent with Pentelic marble, the product of the genius of Pericles and Ictinus, glorified with the statue of Athena Parthenos, the work of Phidias, has been robbed of its treasures; they have gone to enrich the different capitals of Europe. Where now is the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Zeus, the Roman Jupiter? Gone, and gone forever. Where the Aztec gods of three centuries ago? Gone forever. Where Vishnu and Siva and the other

* Quoted by Pictou in *The Mystery of Matter*, p. 122.

gods of the Hindoo Pantheon? Going, and going forever. Neither the veneration for age nor the sacred surroundings of the temple; neither isolation nor mystery; neither pomp of ritual nor the walls of caste nor any other wall can save these Pantheons from the fate of all that have gone before them. They are all gray with age, and in their helpless decrepitude they go tottering down into the grave of a common oblivion. Civilizations have risen around them like tides of the ocean, and yet unlike the tides of ocean, in that every drop has been a living soul, and every soul a sensitive spirit, and every spirit has touched the cold stony forms of these gods and has shrunk shivering from the touch. Having asked for bread it received a stone. The great deep of civilization recedes and leaves its Pantheons to the relic hunter, leaves its temples desolate, its gods of wood and stone like sphinxes standing solitary and sullen, at the mercy of the iconoclast and the tooth of time. The

Elijahs of modern times pass by, and the remaining fanatical devotees cry, "O Baal, hear us!" But the warm life has slipped away from the cold forms, and the stony stare of death is in their eyes. They do not meet the demands of the growing religious ideals.

So must the philosophic monsters called gods up and begone. Positivism, which sets up humanity as its idol, cannot meet the needs of the soul. What is humanity but an abstract notion made up of the individual units of the race? Ideal humanity may never arrive. It does not actually exist, and it may well be doubted whether it ever will exist if God be left out of the case; and even if it should, no one of us will be present to see it. We can consent to be *used*, but we can never consent to be *used up;* we shall not grow spiritually rich while we worship either actual humanity, grimy and ruined, helpless and sick, as it is; nor will our eyes stand out with fatness while we pretend to worship that thin ab-

straction known as ideal humanity. It cannot satisfy the ideals of our religious nature.

The great ethnic religions fail either in their theory of man or of God. Brahmanism, with its keen appreciation of the immanence of the power over all and in all being, confuses and loses both the personality of God and the hope of the permanent personal life of man. Buddhism, with its many attractive moral precepts, has no God.* It lacks motive power. Islamism gives us a god, but he is a god of whom we can only sing, "This awful god is ours." It sounds forever one note, namely, submission to an absolute power.† These and other religious faiths have served a wise purpose. They have kept the religious nature alive and active, waiting the time when "the desire of all nations shall come" to supplement their truth and

* Monier Williams's *Buddhism*, p. 153.

† Carpenter's *The Permanent Elements in Religion*, pp. 78–86, 370.

satisfy the hungry and thirsty millions who wait for that advent.

James Freeman Clarke has given us a very apt thought as to the relation of Christianity to the other religions of the world. It is that each of the ethnic religions has some important truth, but also some mortal defect. Christianity has all these truths and none of these defects; it has the *fullness* of truth, and can therefore meet and supply what is lacking in each. It can give to the Brahman immortality for his doctrine of absorption, and a personal God for his intangible Pantheism. With the Buddhist, who has a strong grasp upon the doctrine that a man's acts will meet him again, the Christian can agree, remembering that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and can add the comforting faith in a heavenly Father who cares for every child of the race. The faith of Christianity differs from that of Mohammedanism in that it provides for communion. God comes down to guide and to

bless. It thus supplies a defect in Mohammedanism. The same capacity to meet the defects of the other ethnic religions is evident. "Christianity has thus shown itself to be a universal solvent, capable of receiving into itself the existing truths of the ethnic religions, and fulfilling them with something higher. Whenever it has come in contact with natural religion it has assimilated it and elevated it. This is one evidence that it is intended to become the universal religion of mankind."* That teaching of Jesus recorded in John xiv, 1, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," was either a most audacious assumption or the most profound truth. If Jesus really came from God, and was the Incarnate Logos, he may consistently add to the belief in God, "believe also in me." He will make good his claim by satisfying the religious ideals of human nature.

There is a kind of divinity in man himself. He is divine enough to recognize the

*James Freeman Clarke's *Ten Great Religions*, p. 504.

God he seeks when he finds him. There is something in man that demands the perfect, the eternal. We live in a world full of imperfection; it is found in every flower and leaf, in every life and every man; it is conspicuous in the cradle and the cemetery, and at every step of the way between. We are in the midst of it, and, to a limited extent, of it, and yet we are above it. Something works in us the thought of the true, of the absolutely true, the eternally true, and we cannot rest. No sooner do we find that the principles are false which we have held to be true, than, lifted as by an irresistible impulse, we rise to assert and seek the perfectly true. Something works in us the sense of the beautiful. A daub may satisfy us to-day, a mediocre to-morrow, but it takes a masterpiece the next day, and on the following we move on toward the ideal, which the imagination constructs of cloud and color and form "that never was on sea or land."

Man's religious nature works under the same law. His religious ideals demand that his sins be forgiven; he cannot rest with the thought that God looks upon him as a guilty offender, and Christ provides for that demand. He must know God as a Father and man as a brother; he must believe that the divine Father works in him by his Spirit for the perfect realization of this filial relation. Among the religious masters of the age Christ stands alone in his promise to meet and satisfy these demands. The promise made to Abraham, the hope proclaimed by Isaiah, the victory prophesied by Paul, and the consummation seen by John, all match well the claim made by Jesus, while the progress of the centuries and the signs of our times, now well above the horizon in all the world's vast heathenism, confirm us in the faith and assure us of its final victory.

CHAPTER XII.

CHRIST AND IMMORTALITY.

THE question which Job asked, the ages have continued to ask, "If a man die, shall he live again?" * The answer which Christ gave to his troubled disciples when they learned that he was really to leave them is the only perfectly satisfactory answer. He said to them:

> Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.†

This answer is a fitting climax to the system of Christian doctrine. That system subordinates everything to one purpose, namely, to the development and establishment of the kingdom of God.

* Job xiv, 14. † John xiv, 1–3.

But that kingdom is made up of individuals, and is nothing apart from them. All the agents of the kingdom, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are ordained to one end, namely, that the members of the kingdom may be brought "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." * Christ's teaching concerning man is that he is in the image of God; that human souls are worth more to God than anything else in this universe; that they are so dear to him that he is ready to put himself to great cost for their redemption and deliverance from the thraldom of sin. According to Paul the whole creation has reference to man; it goes groaning on toward the day of the manifestation of the sons of God.†

If by the light of science we trace the vast movements of life before man appeared it is found to be toward conditions more and more favorable to brain development. If we follow the course of history since his

* Eph. iv, 13. † Rom. viii, 18–25.

advent we find it leading to conditions which favor moral development. Man in society *must* take up and deal with moral relations and obligations. Society forces it upon him. The goal of history is society under the best conditions. But that means society rich in the intellectual wealth and moral power of the individuals that constitute it. We see the bravest, the brainiest, and the best crowded to the front to serve the cause of society; the bravest with pike and gun making war against impending barbarisms; the brainiest with facile pen and eloquent tongue set for the development and defense of reason; and the best ever engaged in the service of all, even the lowest, that man may be brought to the realization of ideal manhood. In spite of all opposing forces this stress is ever upon man to bring the fittest into service. Its root is religious. Christ's theory of man recognizes this movement and explains it. We are sons and daughters of the living God, and God is at work in us

to make us fit for and bring us into his eternal home.

That is the whole philosophy of immortality in a nutshell. The creation, endowment, redemption, forgiveness, and resurrection, with all the great promises and inspiring hopes, are grounded at last in the unfailing love of God offered to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Christian doctrine of immortality gives meaning to all that has gone before it, and is the only possible rational outcome of the Christian system.

The expectation of a future life, with its rewards and punishments, is practically universal. It takes on very strange forms, but under all its forms appears the demand of a religious ideal, which is constitutive of our nature. The Greenlander burying a dog with the little child (since the dog can find his way anywhere); the Winnebagoes lighting a fire for four successive nights on the grave of the departed warrior, that they may light the spirit in

its four lonely night encampments on the way to the land of spirits; the Norsemen, with their palace Walhalla, the paradise of the fallen heroes, whence they issue at cock-crowing to sumptuous feasting and glorious battle; the Chinaman burning paper images of houses, furniture, and whatever else the spirit may need, thus passing them by fire into the invisible state for the use of the deceased; the Greek who punishes the Titans, "those monsters who tried by piling up mountains to storm the heavenly abodes," and who requires all souls to pass the court of three upright judges; these,* and many other curious rites found among the Orientals, show that men everywhere feel themselves compelled to make provision for a future. Whence the inspiration of this hope? Why does man continue to assume and affirm the reality of the future life? The old poet quoted by Alger says:

* See Alger's *History of the Doctrine of Future Life*, pp. 82, 178.

So, thou hast immortality in mind?
Hast grounds that will not let thee doubt it?
The strongest ground herein I find:—
That we could never do without it!

That is the gist of it. But is our faith less commanding because thus anchored in the bed rock of our spiritual nature; is it less fecund and consolatory because nourished at the fountain of our religious ideals than it would be if drawn up by the unbroken chain of a logical syllogism? There are many demands in our nature for which we can only give the reason that we cannot do without them. We insist that the universe shall be rational and moral. On precisely the same ground the human soul insists on its faith in immortality.

We cannot demonstrate the immortality of the soul. The claim that man is made in the image of God, and that the soul is as indestructible as God, or that the soul is a unit and cannot be taken to pieces, since a unit has no parts, and is

therefore immortal, is futile and false. God is independent, and the soul of man, with all created being, is dependent. The continuance of the soul in time and in eternity must therefore be forever dependent on God. It will not do to deny independence to God, and thus wreck the whole government of the universe in order to secure necessary immortality to man. Paul teaches that "In him we live, and move, and have our being."* That is sound philosophy as well as inspired Scripture. The fact is that this ideal demand of our nature needs to be supplemented by revelation. That comes to us in the words of the Lord Jesus. He satisfies our ideals. His teaching on this subject is therefore not only the only rational culmination of the Christian system, but also the only satisfactory response to the demands of our nature.

The method of his teaching upon this theme is in harmony with that in all his

* Acts xvii, 28.

teaching. He did not argue the case. He left that to us, who have no alternative. We must gather up the intimations of immortality and make the most of them. We may observe the caterpillar in his way through the chrysalis state about to emerge a beautiful butterfly; may observe Nature as her forms go down to annual death. The winds sough through the bare branches of the later autumn, the storm revels above the grave of her beautiful children, and winter wraps them all in her spotless shroud. But Nature's children are not dead, they only sleep. Listen to the song of the mother bird in this May-time; listen to the rush of the life-currents along all the fruitful branches; all nature is alive, and one would think, with the vigor and promise of life for evermore. We may add to this the inequalities of life; the wicked are often fat and thrifty, and the good lean and hungry; and to this the hard limitations of life; the hostile environment that hampers us, the bad heritage in the

blood that stultifies us, the insuperable obstacles that balk us and quench our aspirations. We may pile up our facts, the horror of death and the longing for life; but though we pile them mountain-high, we are very far from a valid "therefore we shall live forever." In response to all this we hear Lowell saying:

> Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
> Your moral most drearily true;
> But, since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,
> I keep hearing that and not you.
>
> Console if you will, I can bear it;
> 'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
> But not all the preaching since Adam
> Has made Death other than Death.
>
> It is pagan; but wait till you feel it,
> That jar of our earth, that dull shock
> When the plowshare of deeper passion
> Tears down to our primitive rock.

All these facts are significant when we know that the world is bound to satisfy our ideals. That we can know only from revelation, and that revelation comes to us in Jesus Christ. He spake the authoritative word on the meaning of our life. He

was no scribe. He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." He never wavered. He did not hesitate. There was no cold, gray doubt in his eye, no shudder of foreboding fear at his heart. He did not need to hesitate. He spake as he had always spoken, with authority; before all the great issues of life and destiny there is the same sublime undertone of authority. He dares to forgive sin, neither does his cheek blanch while he voices the word "forgiven." He dares to invite the weary world to find rest in him, and is as calm as the deep sea. He commands disease and deaths and devils, and they obey. He did not need to argue from logical premise to heavenly mansions. He is more consistent. He did not vacate his authority by any such weakness. He spake as one that had come from the Father's house, and that knew whereof he spake. There is sublime consistency in the method of this utterance with all the high prerogatives he had assumed toward

his disciples, toward the race, toward nature, and toward God. When our limping logic fails and our weak faith falters and all our hopes uprooted lie bare to the cold world; when our ideals have fallen down from heaven, and life is not worth living, then comes the authoritative word of him who spake as never man spake, with inexpressible comfort and triumphant assurance. We begin to live again. The authoritative word of Christ, which has for its philosophy the unfailing love of God, just fits the ideal demands of our nature. While it is true we can sing:

> Give joy or grief,
> Give ease or pain,
> Take life or friends away,
> But let me find them all again
> In that eternal day.

May it not be because this faith springs from an ideal demand of our nature that the poet deals so much more successfully with it than the logician? Construct it as you will, the isolated premises of the syllogism seem weak and empty. The

poet, like the prophet, is a seer. On the wings of his swift vision he sweeps by the plodding reasoner, carries with him the essential content of the reasoner's premises, and gives us the total result of his vision in one adequate picture. Whatever the philosophy of the fact, the fact remains that the poet is the true interpreter of the Master's authoritative word on immortality. Lowell sings:

> Somewhere is comfort, somewhere faith,
> Though these in utter dark remain;
> One sweet sad voice ennobles death,
> And still for eighteen centuries saith,
> Softly, *Auf wiedersehen.*

Or we may find in Whittier's *Snow-Bound* a simple melody that fills the eyes with tears. The "youngest and dearest" has slipped away, and he recalls her as she sat:

> Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
> Now bathed in the unfading green
> And holy peace of Paradise.
> O, looking from some heavenly hill,
> Or from the shade of saintly palms,
> Or silver reach of river calms,
> Do those large eyes behold me still?
> . . . . . .

And now, when summer south winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at hand the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

THE END.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: August 2005

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